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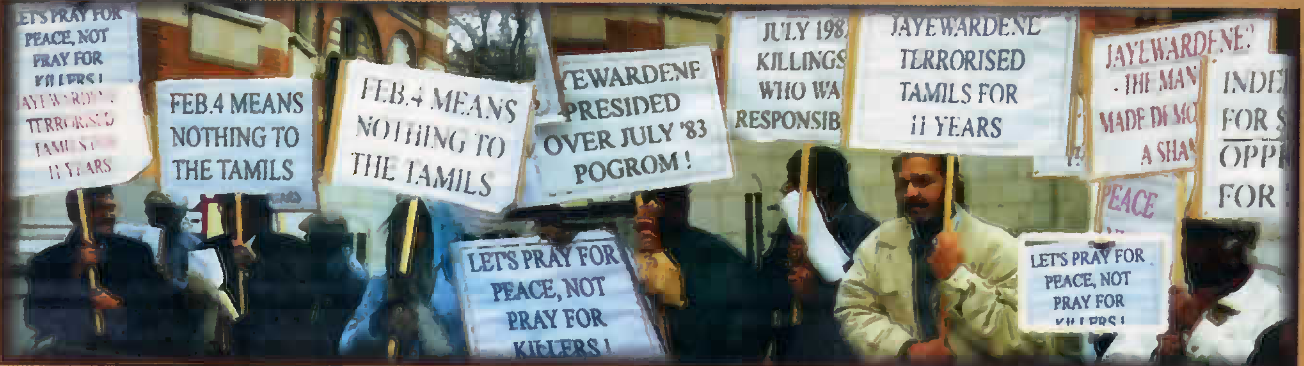
Hot Spring

A Journal of Commitment

- February 1997 -

JAYEWARDENE TERRORISED TAMILS FOR 11 YEARS
FEB.4 MEANS NOTHING TO THE TAMILS

Feb. 4 fiasco at Westminster


LET'S PRAY FOR PEACE, NOT PRAY FOR KILLERS!
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JAYEWARDENE - THE MAN MADE DEMOCRACY A SHAM
PEACE
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TEEDOR

Tamil Eelam Economic Development Organisation

NOTIFICATION OF POSTPONEMENT OF SEMINAR IN LONDON

International Symposium: *'Towards meeting the energy requirements of Tamil Eelam'*

Venue : *Imperial College, University of London, UK.*

Date: *Sunday, 16th March 1997*

Teedor regrets to announce the postponement of this seminar due to unavoidable circumstances. A seminar on the same theme is now envisaged for Saturday, 20th September 1997. Arrangements will be notified in due course.

We apologise to the many speakers and registrants who have been in contact with us for any inconvience caused as a result of the postponement. Those who have already paid the seminar fee may either request a refund or apply to carry over their payments towards the re-arranged seminar.

In planning for the new seminar, we are also calling again for papers from specialists and experts in the various energy related topics, to reach us befors 30th June 1997.

Some of the major topics to be covered in this conference are:

1) Renewable Energy

* Wind power for localised pumping and milling

* Wind power for electricity generation

* Solar power

* Biomass

* Synthetic fuels

* Wave

* Hydro

2) Fossil Fuel

* Thermal power generation using fuel oil, coal, tar sands, shaleoil, orimulsion or geothermal energy. The range of optimal generating capacities, location, enviromental, considerations and investment and production economics.

* Consolidation and assessment of existing geological and geophysical studies for hydrocarbon bearing structures in the onshore and offshore areas of Tamil Eelam.

* The long-term case for economics and financing for further exploration, drilling and feasiblity studies and consideration of joint venture partnerships.

for futher information contact:
The Conference Co-ordinator, TEEDOR, Eelam House, 202 Long Lane, London SE1 4QB
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Hot Spring

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Major military offensive by Sri Lankan armed forces code-named "Operation Edibala" on Sri Lankan Independence Day, February 4 causes massive refugee exodus. "Heavy artillery fire is raining down on a number of villages causing civilians to flee in massive waves", said an LTTE statement.

130 Eelam Tamils drown in the sea off Mannar, in a desperate bid to escape to India from the advancing Sri Lankan troops. LTTE declare a state of mourning on 22 February.

Governing party M.P Nalanda Ellawala killed in the course of party rivalry between the UNP and People's Alliance. UNP Parliamentarian Susantha Punchinilame and Ratnapura's former Mayor Mahinda Ratnatilleke who were wanted by the police later surrender. Rioting in Ratnapura. Houses, shops and buildings of UNP supporters torched. Government imposes curfew.

173 Tamils who fled Sri Lanka land at Amsterdam airport in a Turkmenistan Airways Boeing 757, and seek asylum.

A Sri Lankan military plane crashes during take-off at Ratmalana killing four servicemen and injuring forty others. The crash was the third incident involving an Air Force plane within two months. A Chinese-built Y-12 went missing with a crew of four, in January and a few days later, an Israeli-built Kfir fighter plane fell into the sea after take-off. Another unmanned Air Force Drone used for surveillance was also lost in the north. The Russian-built An-32 which crashed at Ratmalana was the third Antanov to crash. The two earlier ones crashed in September and November 1995.

"WHAT THEY SAY"

"Who the hell does Chandrika think she is to use the Police to harass me Politically ? The Police has never been into my house in this fashion before. Even though I was one of Premadasa's most severe critics, he did not stoop to this level".

- Anura Bandaranaike, M.P. when a large Police party surrounded his residence at Rosemead Place at 3 a.m. on 12 February. Quoted by Columnist Suranimala, SUNDAY LEADER, Feb.16.

* * * * *

"On both sides, the youth get killed. Finally, it is like a cricket match where we go by the scores. If ten LTTE members and two army personnel get killed, we feel as if we have won the day. This attitude is sickening. The war psychosis must end, and we should help achieve apolitical solution, if not for any other reason, at least to preserve the youthful lives".

- recently murdered governing party M.P. Nalanda Ellawala, in an interview with THE ISLAND two weeks before he was killed.

* * * * *

"The main election pledge of the PA government in 1994 was the elimination of terror. This has been fulfilled. Everyone is now safe"

- Deputy Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte, addressing a seminar on Civil Defence. SUNDAY OBSERVER, Feb.16.

* * * * *

"When Vijaya's widow Chandrika pledged on his coffin to continue his struggle and raised her hands as a symbol of her pledge, we believed that his martyrdom had inspired her into fulfilling his tasks. We soon found out our mistake. In opposing the decision (taken by none other than Vijaya) to field a candidate from the United Socialist Alliance at the 1988 Presidential election, Chandrika paved the way for the gradual disintegration of the Left Alliance which was Vijay's labour of love.."

- Sarath Kongahage M.P. and a former SLMP leader, SUNDAY TIMES, Feb.16.

* * * * *

"Three aircraft in five days (one pilotless) and four within six weeks! Reminiscent of World War II, and unparalleled in the history of local insurrections worldwide, making it a nightmare beginning for the Sri Lanka Air Force in 1997."

- Air Vice Marshal, Harry Goonetileke, Weekend Express Feb.8-9

"You can't really call this a war. A war is when two sides are engaging each other. Right now, the government soldiers are simply not fighting".

- a Zaire-based diplomat commenting on the guerilla war against President Mobutu's government, quoted by the WASHINGTON POST

* * * * *

"He was a hero to us, and he betrayed us all.He's a charming man, a nice man, but charming men can kill"

- a juror at the O.J.Simpson case in America in which Simpson was ordered to pay 25 million dollars in punitive damages.

International

* * * * *

"If we want to send the Arabs and Africans and ASIANS back to where they came from, it is not because we hate them, it is because they pollute our national identity and take our jobs"

- a leading member of the racist extreme right National Front of Jean-Marie Le Pen in France.

* * * * *

"We are overwhelmed, the graves we dig every day aren't enough"

- a grave digger in Algiers, Algeria, after a wave of massacres and car bombings killed 350 people during Ramadan.

* * * * *

"Imran advised me that I should consider an abortion because a girl would not be able to play cricket. I, however refused and gave birth to Tyrian Jade on June 15, 1992".

- British heiress Sita White filing a paternity suit against Imran Khan.

* * * * *

"I read daily in Colombo newspapers about suicides over seemingly trivial things like a bad grade or an insult. "Sri Lanka has one of the highest suicide rates in the world," a U.S.official in Colombo told me, "Why should we be surprised that a Tiger would commit suicide for his nation, when a wife will do it because her husband didn't like dinner ? "

- NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC magazine Senior Editor Writer Priit J.Vesilind in his feature on Sri Lanka in the January 1997 issue of the magazine.

February 4

Fiasco at Westminster

Cover Story

Hot Spring
Feb 4 MEANS NOTHING TO THE TAMILS
Feb. 4
fiasco at Westminister

An attempt by a British M.P. of Sri Lankan origin, Nirj Joseph Deva, to use the Westminster Cathedral for a political purpose on Sri Lanka's Independence Day ended in a fiasco.

Mr.Nirj Deva used House of Commons notepaper to send round 500 invitations for what he said was an Inter-denominational service at the cathedral. The invitees included the House of Commons Speaker Mrs.Betty Boothroyd.

The invitation said:-

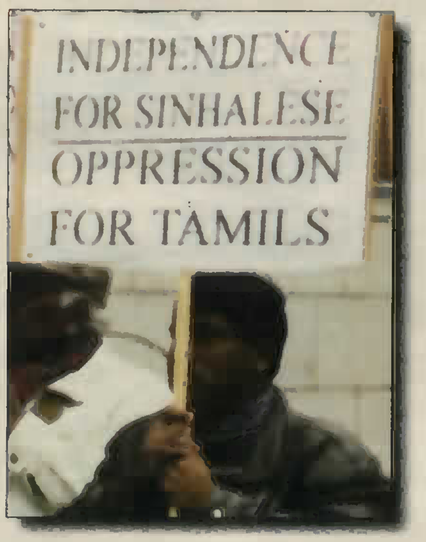
"You are cordially invited to attend an Inter-denominational service in commemoration and thanksgiving of the Life and Work of the late H.E.Junius Richard Jayewardene at Westminster Cathedral on Tuesday 4th February 1997 at 11.15 p.m."

On the intervention of some senior Tamil citizens, Rev.Fr.Michael of the Westminster Cathedral countermanded the earlier permission given for the use of the Cathedral and made it known to Mr.Deva that he could use the side chapel for his private memorial, and that the Inter-faith session will be at the cathedral and that no speeches would be allowed.

Message from Fr. Michael Seed

Here is the message from Rev.Fr.Michael Seed,

"Previously, at the invitation of Mr.Nirj Joseph Deva MP. whom I have known for ten years, I solemnised his wedding some years ago. I also met his uncle Mr.J.R.Jayewardene at that wedding. Following the death of his uncle, Mr.Nirj asked if there could be a simple memorial service for him. I knew nothing of the delicate political issues involved and certainly not how the Tamils viewed his uncle. I learnt later that as many as 500 invitations have been sent out for the commemoration service at the Westminster Cathedral on 4th Feb.1997.



"After listening to the views of several people concerned about plight of the Tamils under Mr.Jayewardene's administration, I decided -

(a) it was too late to stop people coming for the service,

(b) that the service should be one for Peace in Sri Lanka, consisting of Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists and Christians each praying in their own way.

This was acceptable to Mr.Nirj Deva. But from the invitations sent out there appears to be an expectation of a memorial to his uncle. To totally distinguish the memorial service from the Inter faith session, the 11.15 a.m. service will be in the side chapel. This will be a private memorial at the request of Mr.Nirj Deva. The service for Peace will follow at about 11.40 a.m. in the main body of the Church. There will be a joint lighting of the Peace candle by all the religious leaders followed by their prayers. There will be no speech made by anyone during this service.

Madame Speaker's office, Mr. Nirj Deva and all the invited religious leaders are fully aware of the changes that have had to be made".

Protest by Ivan Pedropillai

Earlier, Mr.Ivan Pedropillai of Cheam, Surrey, had sent the following communication to Rev.Fr,Michael Seed:-

Dear Fr.Seed,

Commemoration service for the late Mr.Jayewardene on 4th February

I am in receipt of a notification of the above-mentioned service for the late and unlamented President of Sri Lanka in our esteemed Roman Catholic cathedral tomorrow.

I am writing to you as a Roman Catholic layman of over 30 years standing in this country. I have recently retired from the position of a senior executive with the Shell International

(overleaf)

February 4

Fiasco at Westminster

Group in London. It pains me to see that you and the honourable Catholic hierarchy... have been duped into holding this service for a cruel tyrant who as President boasted of the mass deaths that he and his genocidal army inflicted on the innocent Tamil civilians in Sri Lanka. The ethnic cleansing of the Tamils in 1983 where rivers of Tamil blood flowed under his direct malevolent encouragement should be the only proper memorial to the evil in this man.

If you were only to telephone the editors of the obituary pages of the British national newspapers for their notices last year reporting Jayewardene's death, you would no doubt have learnt of this unreformed murderer's insatiable appetite to remain in power at all costs. More than 50,000 deaths of youths from both the Sinhala and Tamil community can be attributed to his despotic policies. He was born and baptised a Christian (Junius Richard) but chose to abandon his Christian faith and to become a Buddhist not out of any new conviction, but merely to advance his political ambitions in a country of militant Buddhism.

DONT ALLO
"OLD FOXES" I
THE HOUSE
OF GOD !

It behoves you and the others involved from our church to have made the proper and objective enquiries before you agreed to this craven service in his tainted memory. There must be a least a fifty thousand innocents in their graves and many more of their relatives and friends crying out for justice. Is your conscience troubled? Would you have so readily agreed to a commemoration and thanksgiving service for Pol Pot, Stalin or Hitler? Do you really think that the Church of our Dear Lord Jesus Christ can celebrate the "life and work of the late J.R.Jayewardene, as ostentatiously claimed in the published notice

It probably is too late to call off tomorrow's service but you would go a long way to achieve a proper sense of justice and balance if you were to pray at this service for the souls of the innocent dead caused by Jayewardene's machiavellian politics and for Peace in Sri Lanka which is blighted by narrow chauvinistic Buddhist politics. Christ demands of us to bear witness to the truth and I am sure you and I are called to do it in this instance too ".

PROTEST VIGIL AT WESTMINISTER

A representative group of protesters including senior Tamil citizen C.J.Thamotheram, and former Chairman of the Sri Lankan Rupavahini TV Corporation, Vasantha Rajah, kept vigil in front of Westminster Cathedral on 4th February.

This vigil by persons of all denominations was in response to what was originally planned by Mr.Nirj Deva as an interdenominational service to remember the life and work of the former Sri Lankan President J.R.Jayewardene.

A letter to speaker House of Commons Betty Boothroyd

25 Northumberland Road
North Harrow, Middlesex
HA2 7RA
Thursday 6th February 1997

Dear Madam,

I was among those who stood in picket outside Westminster Cathedral on the morning of 4th February, during the service commemorating the life of the late Mr. J.R. Jayawardena.

As you left the Cathedral, after the service, you came up to us and gently chided us for not attending the service ourselves. You told us that you had been Sri Lanka many times and that it was a lovely place with friendly people.

Clearly, you were talking about the tourists' Sri Lanka in the south of that Island, with its sandy beaches, helpful officials and obsequious hotel staff. Also no doubt, as speaker of the British House of Commons, you would have received VIP treatment all the way.

I enclose a copy of the January 1997 issue of 'Hot Spring', the journal of the Eelam Tamil Diaspora. This journal, which has a wide international readership, gives the other side of the coin.

The Sinhala war of attrition against the Tamils of the North/East, has been going on for the last 20 years. During this period, to mention but a few well documented instances under the Presidency of Jayawardena- The Jaffna public library (reputed to be one of the best in the East) was gutted and its rare collection of books (some of them rare first editions) destroyed , by Sinhala policemen bought in to Jaffna for purpose: the offices and the press of the 'Saturday Review', an independent minded English language journal, were smashed. The state orchestrated Pogrom of 1983, when thousands of Tamils were killed(some being burnt alive in their cars) and their houses looted and gutted. It is surprising that we Tamils have nothing to be grateful for the life of Jayawardena?

I know you are a very busy person but please, make the time to read this journal.

I am copying this letter to the editor of 'Hot Spring'

Sincerely yours
Charles Somasundrum.

AN OPEN LETTER TO KARUNANIDHI FROM A SINHALESE

S.De Silva

Sir, forgive my sudden intrusion into your country's politics. But what I have to say can be put off no longer.

Since your convincing victory in Tamil Nadu I have seen the Eelam Tamils watch eagerly and desperately where you might tread. They were suspended in anxious anticipation, wondering what new hopes Tamil Nadu might bring to their tortured and traumatised lives.

They have become increasingly despondent.

Not that they are unaware of the complexity of Indian politics, the need for diplomacy and tact in your dealings with central government. But they had a deeper hope - that Tamil Nadu would give them a voice sadly lacking in the international arena.

Why did they depend so much on you, Sir?

Because they knew your history. Your evolution as a man and as a politician. They had faith in your solid grasp of Tamil nationalism and its historical legitimacy. They knew of course, the difficulty you would have in presenting their national leadership (the LTTE) to the Indian central government, the centre being, after all, wary that the LTTE was responsible for the death of one of your country's leaders. But Eelam Tamils hoped you would rise above unproved allegations, and even above personal grivances, and grasp historical reality.

I took interest in your comments soon after you came to power. You said you believed the solution to Sri Lanka's conflict was "Tamil Eelam". I believe fully your sincerity. But sincerity has to be equally supplemented by political insight and appropriate action. Realistically, could Tamil Eelam be achieved without the LTTE? Is the Sri Lankan government by itself really motivated by any sort of solution that comes anywhere near the concept of Tamil Eelam? No, it wants to "devolve" local authority powers to an ancient, proud and dignified Tamil nation! The truth is, only the LTTE keeps the possibility of Tamil Eelam alive for Tamils. Those other Tamil politicians in Colombo (such as Douglas Devananda) trying to rub shoulders with you will be thrown into the dustbin by the government the very moment the LTTE is out of the picture - but these Colombo Tamil politicians are too naive and self-obsessed to realise it. (Please, Sir do not dignify them with your time). What is more, a cursory look at any of our Sri Lankan newspapers shows the total inability of Sinhala society to come to terms with the concept of Tamil Eelam. They will never accept it willingly.

That is why Sri Lanka will endeavour to wipe out the LTTE which they know is the only movement which threatens Sinhala rule over the Tamils. Once that task is accomplished, Eelam will be dead and the Tamil nation will again be at the mercy of the Sinhala state as in the past. Can Tamil Nadu allow a return to a time when state-sponsored anti-Tamil riots killed 3000 Tamils and the Tamil people could do absolutely nothing to defend themselves?

Sir, even as a Sinhalese man I acknowledge that it is only the existence of the LTTE which prevents such incidents recurring today.

If you stand by and let the Sri Lankan government weaken and destroy the LTTE (when you actually have the power to help the Tamil people achieve the safety of Eelam) you will be doing a great disservice to generations of Tamil people. You will be literally abandoning them to a fate worse for them than death. You are already aware of the callous disregard the Sri Lankan navy has for your own Indian Tamil fishermen, so you can well appreciate the racist character of the Sri Lankan state. There is no point anybody deluding themselves otherwise. If the LTTE is wiped out, that is the final nail in the coffin of the Tamil nation. Tamils will be left utterly without defences.

> *How tragic that there are even some kind-hearted Sinhalese people who are doing more to support the Tamil struggle under the LTTE leadership than even politicians in Tamil Nadu. These people, myself included, work every minute of the day to help deliver Tamil Eelam, knowing the immorality of our own governments war-effort. And we do so at great cost to our lives and safety.*

That is why, Sir, I want to impress upon you the urgency of this hour. To take a neutral stance is tantamount to allowing Sri Lanka to win its racist war to crush Tamil nationalism. Your neutrality' is, in all practical senses, support for Sri Lanka, whether you intend it or not. To stand back now is to facilitate Sri Lanka's mission of destroying Eelam. Can a Tamil Nadu state government be remembered in history for allowing such a grave and serious injustice to happen?

So let me emphasise, Sir. To support "Tamil Eelam" and not the LTTE is a contradiction in terms. Support for Tamil Eelam remains abstract unless it is backed by support for the LTTE. This is why the people of Tamil Eelam today feel so betrayed by the rest of the world. Theirs has become a lonely struggle against the fiercest odds. They have grown weary of abstract support. They are tired of sympathisers' who do not grasp the sheer gravity of their struggle against a most ruthless opponent. They need you to openly support their leadership - the LTTE - the leadership that has become necessary not only for their liberation but for their very survival. A force less capable than the LTTE would have meant the end of the Tamil nation long ago. It is only the LTTE that keeps Eelam alive, vibrant and possible.

If you penetrate the political reality of that country, Sir, you will see that Sri Lanka's "war for peace" is aimed at marginalising and destroying the LTTE. What is the LTTE to them? I will tell you. The LTTE is the only indigenous Tamil movement capable of delivering Tamil Eelam to the Tamil people. The Sri Lankan government knows this and that is why it pursues its callous military strategy and thanks its lucky stars for your "neutrality".

Today, the Sri Lankan government knows that the Tamil people of Eelam fully back the LTTE leadership. That is why the government has given the nod to a more brutal military strategy of late to try and diminish the population of Tamils in the hope of making them more "managable". Sinhala armed forces have already begun scorching Tamil rice fields, denying Tamils medicines to weaken them, bombing ordinary Tamil villages and raping and molesting Tamil women while torturing and murdering their youth. Can Tamil Nadu, as a dignified nation of Tamils, remain "neutral" in the face of such extremities against fellow Tamils? Isn't now the time to raise your voice and raise it defiantly? Because I assure you, Sir, the fate of Tamils in Sri Lanka will steadily deteriorate unless Tamil Nadu's stance changes into a proactive one. Tamil Nadu is perhaps the only friend who could turn events around, give back a glimmer of hope to Eelam Tamils. But will it act? Or will it remain neutral while more Tamil school-girls in Eelam are abducted from army checkpoints only to be found floating in the sea tied in army sacks with their young throats cut? This situation, Sir, is too serious to keep quiet about any longer.

In order to conduct its covert genocidal strategy Sri Lanka needed to secure a number of things. First, funds for the job. It did this without difficulty because the western powers bought the lie that the LTTE had unreasonably pulled out from peace talks. The LTTE in fact withdrew from the government's phoney negotiations before the military could take them by surprise.

Second, the government had to try and cut LTTE funds. So it sent Minister Kadirgamar around the world to secure this, pretending he was representative of Tamils in general when, on the contrary, he is roundly despised by them.

Third, the government sought to "neutralise" India, especially Tamil Nadu. This was the final target of its strategy to destroy the Tamil people's dream of Tamil Eelam. Sadly, its efforts to neutralise India have been so far successful. But, Sir, is Tamil Nadu diplomacy in relation to the Indian central government really worth more than the blood of innocent Tamils in Eelam?

Mr Karunanidhi, Sri Lanka's initial anxiety at your own return to power was easily laid to rest after your first few months in office. For although you spoke in favour of Tamil Eelam, it was clear to Sri Lanka that your support for Eelam would remain abstract, and therefore entirely non-threatening to their war aims. They had successfully "neutralised" you.

> *"......To support "Tamil Eelam" and not the LTTE is a contradiction in terms. Support for Tamil Eelam remains abstract unless it is backed by support for the LTTE......"*

But Sir, I want to point out a harsh truth that must not be avoided: to turn your back on the LTTE (whatever your reservations about them) is to facilitate the destruction of Tamil Eelam. It is as plain as that. The momentum of the Sinhala state is not towards an honourable settlement with the Tamil people but towards defeating of the LTTE so that an honourable settlement with the Tamil people becomes unnecessary.Those Tamil parties in Colombo, if the LTTE is defeated, would hold absolutely no bargaining power for the Tamils in the aftermath of a Sri Lankan military victory. The Tamils' voice would have been effectively silenced.

So to turn your back on the LTTE is to pave the way for the Sinhalese government to rule Tamils again. It is to ferment the conversion of the Tamil nation into a permanent powerless ethnic minority in its own homeland. Rest assured, Sir, that your neutral stance in relation to Sri Lanka's war-effort is therefore tantamount to dismantling Eelam. And it is even more than that - it is turning your back on the basic physical safety of the Tamil people of that island.

How tragic that there are even some kind-hearted Sinhalese people who are doing more to support the Tamil struggle under the LTTE leadership than even politicians in Tamil Nadu. These people, myself included, work every minute of the day to help deliver Tamil Eelam, knowing the immorality of our own government's war-effort. And we do so at great cost to our lives and safety. This is how sad the situation has become. When Eelam Tamils shout, scream and cry, how tragic to find that a nation of Tamils in India buries its head in the sand and leaves a racist Sinhala government to fulfil its historic task of wiping out Tamil nationalism in Tamils' own homeland. Will this really become Tamil Nadu's historical legacy?

Sir, I speak not as an adversary but as a desperate friend in this darkest hour for the Eelam Tamil nation, the survival of which quite literally hangs in the balance. Please do not stand aside any longer - not while your Tamil brethren are pushed further and further towards the brink of extinction. I, as a non-racist Sinhalese man, beg you, and the Eelam Tamils beg you - condemn the Sri Lankan government officially, express unambiguous support for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and usher in the Tamil nation's freedom before any more Tamil men, women and school-children are buried in the name of Sri Lanka's "territorial integrity". Sir, myself a Sinhalese man with great admiration for you, I plead with you to help us concretely (not abstractly) in the historical struggle to liberate Tamil Eelam from the teeth of Sinhala racism forever, so the ancient Eelam Tamil nation can finally live in peace, safety and dignity on that island. Yours in anticipation.

Col. Kittu remembered in Zurich

Kittu Remembrance Day was observed in Zurich, Switzerland, on 11 January in memory of the late LTTE leader Col. Kittu and nine of his compatriots who died at sea four years ago - on 16 January. Picture shows the "Angayatkanni Music Troupe" giving a programme of Tamil Eelam Liberation songs in the presence of a packed gathering.

British Refugee Council report on Sri Lanka

SERIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS ARE CLEARLY CONTINUING

The British Refugee Council report has called for the government of Sri Lanka to rethink its policy on returning Sri Lankan asylum seekers and has urged the government to play a more active role in trying to bring peace to the war-torn country.

The report was launched on Monday 17 February in the Jubilee room at the House of Commons.

The report followed a visit to Sri Lanka by the Refugee Council's Chief Executive, Nick Hardwick in December 1996. Mr.Hardwick met representatives of refugee and human rights organisations as well as government officials.

He also visited refugee camps in Vavuniya and Puttalam in northern Sri Lanka.

Mr.Hardwick said:

"I met and talked to people who bore the visible scars of the torture they'd received at the hands of the military. Serious human rights violations are clearly continuing and there must be grave concerns for the safety of rejected asylum seekers being returned to Colombo.

It is time for the Government to urgently revise its view of the current situation in the light of our report and to take a more active role in trying to bring an end to the civil war which has been tearing the island apart for the last 15 years"-

The report also highlights the plight of asylum seekers from Sri Lanka in the UK. Up to 1993 over 97% of asylum seekers were granted leave to remain in the UK, but since then 95% have been refused despite the deteriorating situation for Tamils in Sri Lanka.

Dissidents bill defeated in House of Commons

The John Major government suffered an embarrassing defeat on 15 February when a bill to stop foreign dissidents in Britain supporting political violence against their own governments failed to clear its final stage in the House of Commons.

Ministers were said to be "steaming" when it emerged that Tory whips had failed to secure the necessary quorum of 40 after two Labour left-wingers unexpectedly forced a vote on the third reading.

The private member's bill,which was partly aimed at pacifying the Saudi regime over the activities of Mohammed al-Mas'ari and other London-based opposition activists, would have made it a criminal offence to incite or organise unlawful acts outside Britain.

The Jurisdiction (Conspiracy and Incitement) Bill was backed by the Government and had the broad support of Labour's frontbench. But it was sharply criticised by the civil liberties group Liberty, which argued that such legislation could have been used to convict Nelson Mandela and other African National Congress leaders when they organised armed resistance against the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Although Labour, Liberal Democrat and Tory MPs all expressed concern at the possible use of the bill against political refugees fighting for justice in their own countries, only George Galloway, Labour MP for Glasgow Hillhead, opposed the bill outright on the floor of the House. Government business managers had been expecting Labour MPs to vote in support of the bill ' But when Mr. Galloway and Dennis Skinner, the Labour MP for Bolsover, pushed the issue to the vote, only 26 Tories could be mustered.

Nigel Waterson, who had sponsored the Home Office drafted bill, said the episode demonstrated Labour's hard left was alive and kicking. "I'm extremely disappointed this important measure in the fight against terrorism has been blocked with these squalid parliamentarytactics."

A war beyond the resources of the Sri Lankan State

(A letter sent to Editor FRONTLINE, Chennai which was not published)

Sir,

1. I write with reference to Ram Manikkalingam's interview with President Kumaratunga carried in your October 4th issue. I am a Sinhalese deeply concerned with the imperative need for peace for both nations on the island.

2. In the first answer of the interview President Kumaratunga draws a distinction between "a traditional war" and the war against the LTTE in Sri Lanka. She acknowledges that the LTTE cannot be wholly eliminated in a hurry. These are percipient and realistic views rare in the Sinhalese discourse on the subject. They re-kindled, therefore, a hope that she understood the very specific nature and the very serious implications of an armed conflict with an ethno-nationalist, secessionist guerilla organization fighting on its home ground for independence. Unhappily, in the answers that followed that hope was dashed.

3. The President says that though the LTTE may not be totally eliminated in the foreseeable future, the Sri Lanka army can regain, and keep control over, the whole territory of the north- east province; the LTTE would then be capable only of minor guerilla attacks; despite such attacks the Tamil population of the area can be weaned away from supporting the LTTE and from the demand for a separate state by a constitutional reform within the single all-island state. This is a very revealing scenario. It sets out on public display how far removed from reality the President and her military advisors and her government have gotten themselves. Let us take the 3 elements of the scenario separately, and in their given sequence, and see how well each stands up against the world's current reality.

4. First, the prospect of military occupation of the whole north-east province, all 7,300 sq. miles of it. The ratio of troops to guerillas required for such an occupation has to be very high. In Northern Ireland (5,500 sq. miles) the British army occupies the entire area and fields a ratio of 100 troops to 1 IRA guerilla. In Sri Lanka, where physical occupation of the area has not been attempted so far on a large scale, the present ratio of Sri Lankan army troops to LTTE guerillas is 10 to 1. An effective physical occupation of the whole north-east province will necessitate the increase of the numbers of the Sri Lanka army by a factor of at least 10 - an escalation wholly beyond the financial or human resources of the Sri Lankan state.

Adrian Wijemanne

5. It is relevant to remember here that the LTTE is 30 times larger in numbers than the IRA, that it already has the capabilities of conventional and naval warfare which the IRA does not possess and that the LTTE presently occupies, in defiance of the state, populated territory equivalent to the entire area of Northern Ireland.

6. Now to the second element of the scenario i.e. that the LTTE can be militarly degraded to the extent that it will be able to mount no more than minor attacks, pinpricks which could be easily scotched. This is the diametrical opposite of the world's (including Sri Lanka's) experience. That experience has been that wars of this nature drag on and on, and as the guerillas suffer one military defeat after another, they re-emerge stronger than before.

7. In Northern Ireland after 28 years of constant conflict the IRA is stronger today than at the beginning in 1968. In Ethiopia after 30 years of deadly warfare the guerillas of the Eritrean Peoples' Liberation Front were stronger at the end than at the beginning. So also on the island of Mindanao in The Philippines where the Moro secessionist Muslim guerillas out-faced and out-fought the US-trained and equipped Philippine army for over 28 years ending last month in a peace treaty giving them control over their home territory. After 13 years of warfare in Sri Lanka the LTTE is stronger now than at the beginning.

8. **This is the systemic paradox of nationalist guerilla wars of secession fought on the guerillas' home ground. In every theatre of such conflict the state has found it impossible to comprehend this mystery.** It is a mystery because of a failure to understand and acknowledge the force of nationalism (in Sri Lanka it is ethnic nationalism, the fiercest and most uncompromising form of nationalism) that impels the guerillas. President Kumaratunga gives an open

President Kumaratunga gives an open and classic demonstration of this mental block. It removes her from the realm of reality to a domain of "make believe".

9. Finally, to the hope that in an atmosphere of calm aconstitutional reform of the single all-island state can be made to satisfy the Tamil nation's desire for an independent, sovereign state of its own for which the Tamil people of the north-east province voted overwhelmingly at the general election of 1977, long before the LTTE achieved its present dominance in Tamil affairs. There can be no more convincing or conclusive declaration of a nation's will than a vote at a general election. The desire for independence and for a separate sovereign state to express and embody that independence is a moral and legitimate aspiration. When the LTTE says it is fighting the state and sacrificing the lives of its troops to translate that determination into a concrete political reality it puts itself on the side of morality and legitimacy. Anyone who offers less not only has to meet the LTTE's challenge but has also to face the far graver test of explaining to the Tamil nation why its perfectly legitimate determination must needs be frustrated and why it must be content with a lesser alternative. Of all the many dilemmas facing the Sri Lankan state and the Sinhala people this one is the most intractable. President Kumaratunga blithely believes this vital issue on the moral plane can be conjured away by a constitutional mantram. once again she gives a classic demonstration of there being no understanding of a nation's deep need and the enormous sacrifices it has made, and continues to make, for it.

10. The interview fills me with sadness. It shows vividly why our two nations are at war and will, unhappily, continue to be at war until the Sinhala people and their government begin to comprehend both the practical impossibility and the moral egregiousness of their position. Thirteen years of war, years of constant, painful thinking about what it all means, have brought no enlightenment. What is ahead is a long, very long period of warfare stretching into the decades of the future.

11.The Irish war of independence lasted, sporadically, for 300 years. Sri Lanka seems set to follow her last imperial ruler's unwise example. The difference is that Sri Lanka is not the world's leading industrial power which Britain was for the whole duration of that conflict right up to its end in 1922 with the establishment of the Irish Free State. On the contrary, Sri Lanka is one of the 50 poorest countries in the world. How will the Sri Lankan state and Sinhala society fare during a long war of attrition against an adversary far more formidable than the original Irish guerillas ever were ? And will the eventual outcome be any different ?

I am, dear Sir,
Yours despondently,
Adrian Wijemanne

Military plane crashes near Colombo: 3 Killed, 36 injured

12:02 a.m. Feb 22, 1997 EST

COLOMBO, Feb 22 (Reuter) - Sri Lanka's military on Saturday raised the death toll from a military plane crash near Colombo to three and said another 36 people had been injured.

Sixteen people were hospitalised after the crash on Friday with the rest discharged after being treated for minor injuries, a military spokesman said.

The Russian-made AN-32 plane with 59 passengers, including four crew, veered off the runway during take-off and crashed into a marshy patch at Ratmalana airbase, 11 km (seven miles) south of Colombo.

Air force officials said the cause of the crash had yet to be determined. The plane, which cracked in the middle, was being removed in two sections to a hangar for investigations to begin, they said.

Some air force officials said on Friday that the crew had decided to abort the flight as it was about to take off but did not say why.

The plane was carrying servicemen to Palaly, a key northern base for the military in its fight against separatist Tamil guerrillas, who are waging a 13-year war for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in Sri Lanka's north and east.

The crash was the third incident involving an air force plane this year. In January, a Chinese-built Y-12 airplane went missing off northern Sri Lanka while on a surveillance mission. Its crew of four was never found.

A few days later, an Isareli-built Kfir fighter jet fell into the sea shortly after taking off from an air force base at Katunayake, north of Colombo, due to suspected mechanical failure. The pilot ejected to safety.

Also in January, an unmanned air force drone, used for reconnaissance was lost over the northern Jaffna peninsula, 320 km (200 miles) north of Colombo.

Eating lobsters in Trinco while Mullaitivu was falling!

M.R. NARAYAN SWAMY

Mainstream

New Delhi, September 14, 1996

Sri Lanka is at crossroads. Thirteen years after a flashpoint anti-Tamil carnage helped a nascent Tamil militant campaign to turn into full-fledged insurgency, there is no let up in the violence ravaging the once island paradise. The humiliating military rout suffered at the hands of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in the north-eastern garrison of Mullaitivu has only brought to the surface the terrible rot from which the country is finding it near impossible to extricate itself. Gone are the heady days when Sri Lankan leaders pompously set targets to wipe out the LTTE. Unfortunately, thanks to a self-defeating censorship (news on the war by foreign TV channels is jammed), many Sri Lankans, including in Colombo, have been prevented from knowing the full details of the Mullaitvu disaster. But that can be no consolation to the Sri Lankan Government.

WELL before dawn on July 18, the LTTE launched its biggest military offensive to date, aimed at wresting the Mullaitivu Army garrison, a strategic one located along the north-eastern coast some 250 kilometres from Colombo. The camp had then housed an estimated 1300 soldiers, including a small naval detachment and about 100 policemen besides some civilians attached to the Army. The sprawling base-one of the biggest in Sri Lanka was located midway between the embattled northern and eastern wings of the island, and could have served as a launching pad in the event the government initiated a major push against the Tigers in the Wanni region. The military garrison was located amid coconut plantations and covered virtually the whole of Mullaitivu town, from where most Tamils had fled. It was flanked on one side by thick rainforests which even battled-hardened Indian troops had found difficult to penetrate during their 1987-90 deployment in Sri Lanka. And not far away lay the LTTEís feared "Base One Fourî-the heavily-guarded hideout of its supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran.

Thousands of heavily-armed LTTE guerrillas (the estimates range between 1000 to 3000) were involved in the meticulously-planned offensive that began with the relentless shower of mortars which a survivor (among the few who managed to escape) later said was awesome. Within two hours, the camp lost contact with the Army headquarters in Colombo. Most soldiers were asleep when the attack began. Within three days, the entire base was overrun by the guerrillas, many of them in their teens. It is probably the greatest military defeat for a regular Army since the Second World War, the first time that an entire garrison was wiped out by an attacking force which lacked artillery. In just 72 hours Sri Lanka lost more than 1200 soldiers-a little more than the number of men the Indian Army lost throughout its acrimonious 32-month stay in Sri Lanka. In a flash the ME brought home the truth of the dragging war, a truth that had somehow got lost in the euphoria which followed the militaryís victory in Jaffna peninsula between December and May in Sri Lanka, the government can never hope to defeat the LTTE militarily Not on its own.

The LTTE threw in the cream of its military muscle at Mulaitivu. It included the dreaded Black Tigers suicide squad, who formed part of the first wave of attack, the Charles Antony Infantry unit, the Leopards Commando unit, the Ankayatkanni Sea Tigers unit, the Sulojan Underwater Operations unit, the women's brigade and anti-aircraft gunners. Its military planning was so astute that the Sri Lankan Army found it near impossible to land reinforcements even 10 kilometers away. When elite army units known as Special Forces did make a sea-borne landing after many hours of fighting, they found the going very

(continued overleaf)

tough. The first lot was easily wiped out. One helicopter pilot refused to fly to the site because of ME ground fire. He relented only when the leader of the unit he was flying whipped out his revolver and threatened to shoot him if he did not comply orders......

DESPITE the popularity she continues to enjoy abroad, President Kumaratunga is no more the darling of Sri Lankans who had voted her to power with a thumping majority only two years ago. The unending war has dashed all hopes of peace-her main electoral campaign. Her new-found zeal for the free-market economy has tarnished beyond repair her original Left-of-Centre appeal.

From being a champion of free media, she is now threatening to gag the Fourth Estate, accusing it of irresponsibility in reporting the war. She is accused of being aloof and moody, approachable easily only to select friends, some of whom help her run the Presidency. Diplomats complain that she is late by several hours at all engagements., (Recently when a Minister reminded her that the Indian High Commissioner had been waiting for more than one hour, she coolly asked her aides to serve him more tea!) Her relations with even her mother, Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike, have strained. So much so that the mother deliberately chose to use her estranged son, Anura, a vocal Opposition MP who regularly criticises sister Chandrika, to send felicitations to Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. If the Colombo grapevine is true, the mother-cum-Prime Minister along with a host of Cabinet Ministers are under telephonic surveillance.

When the Mullaitivu offensive by the LTTE got under way, Kumaratunga was on a mysterious holiday abroad. She had left quietly days earlier with her two children, without leaving a word even to her mother and Cabinet colleagues. The Prime Minister first thought her daughter had gone to Male. Most Sri Lankans thought she was in London or Paris. Later reports revealed she may have travelled to Egypt for a trip on the Nile. (Cabinet Ministers called journalist friends to find out where the President was!) By the time she returned via Dubai after nine days, the Mullaitivu garrison had disappeared off the map. The President, a former socialist, did not think it fit to tell the country where she was amid the disaster. Her Deputy Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte, one of the few who can be called her confidant, had the audacity to say that the President (who also holds the Defence portfolio) "cut shortî her holiday because of the Mullaitivu debacle. He would not say where she had gone or how long her holiday was originally to be.

What strikes any Sri Lankan observer is how Colombo can ever hope to defeat the LTTE, undoubtedly one of the most well-disciplined and ruthless guerrilla groups in the world. The terrible debacle at Mullaitivu has been taken as just another setback. A routine enquiry has been ordered. No head has rolled, and no head will. In a country where thousands of defence personnel have died fighting since 1983, one former Army commander, Hamilton Wanasinghe, is facing corruption charges. Another, Garry de Silva, continues to hold on to 14 cars as well as his official residence although he retired 15 months back. Minister Ratwatte, a cousin of the President, claimed after the Mullaitivu disaster that he was in the battlefront. Furious defence officers called journalists to say he was far away-in Trincomalee. He had stayed at the military complex there. And local military officials, eager to butter the Minister, ordered six airconditioners from Colombo and lobsters from Jaffna to. make his stay comfortable. A military aircraft fetched the airconditioners, and a helicopter brought the lobsters. This when the military was getting slaughtered!

Since the LTTE resumed its war for Eelam in April 1995, the Sri Lankan military has suffered one disaster after another. The Air Force and Navy have been the worst sufferers, and, according to many, the worst culprits. Some pilots refused to fly to Jaffna last year after the ME brought down military planes over the peninsula. The air force has lost two AN-32s, one Chinese-build Y-8 transporter, one MI-17 helicopter, two Avros and a Puccara ground aircraft. The Navyís losses are staggering gunboats, fast attack craft, landing craft and two motherships (not including the navy commander himself who was blasted by a suicide bomber in Colombo in November 1992). Even while the Mullaitivu battle was on, LTTE suicide bombers driving speed boats packed-with explosives rammed and sank a gunboat, Ranaviru. The Ranaviru (with 32 men on board) had strayed towards the coast but tried to beat a hasty retreat when it spotted a flotilla of LTTE boats. But a LTTE suicide boat came chasing it and rammed it in the back, killing its engine. Another LTTE boat dashed against the middle of the gunboat, triggering a massive explosion. A third LTTE boat finally sank the boat. Other LTTE

boats shot dead naval personnel floating with life jackets. One of the four survivors of that battle later swore that other Sri Lankan naval ships had watched the attack from a distance!

The Mullaitivu rout is bound to have far-reaching consequences on the military. Although the LTTE is known to be facing a shortage of fighters, and had admitted this publicly ahead of the Jaffna battle, the army's situation is no better. Recently, when the military advertised for 10,000 vacancies in the Army, there were only 1800 applications. After Mullaitivu, getting even that many would be difficult. In the past six years, thousands of soldiers have deserted the army, and despite repeated appeals very few have returned. Politically, the President's attempts at devolution as an alternative to Eelam have not taken her far. This is her greatest debacle, one much more serious than Mullaitivu in the long run.

TODAY almost all the anti-LTTE Tamil groups have few good things to say about Kumaratunga. She is accused of having first dilly-dallied and later watered down her autonomy package to placate the majority Sinhalese community. When Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar recently announced that Colombo would talk to the LTTE only if the latter surrendered a substantial quantity of its weapons, the anti-LTTE groups ironically criticised the government (although they remain targets of LTTE violence). "What moral right does the government have to ask the LTTE to put down weapons?, asked Dharmalingam Siddhathan of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE). Siddhathan's argument was simple: "The other Tamil militant groups gave up militancy in 1987. Today what achievements do they have to their credit? If they could achieve nothing even after giving up their weapons, why would and why should the LTTE surrender its weapons?, Even Douglas Devananda, who heads the Eelam Peopleís Democratic Party and had survived an LTTE assassination bid this year, shares the sentiments. So does the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation. All these groups give active help to the security forces in parts of the island in the war against the LTTE.

But sections of the ruling and Opposition parties and, of course, the Buddhist clergy remain steadfastly opposed to any talks, to any concession. Anything the government does to solve the crisis is seen as the first step to Eelam. The more hardline a stand sections of the Sinhalese community take, the more support the LTTE generates within the Tamil community, including from those who have no love for the group. Although human rights abuses have decreased in some Army-controlled areas, large numbers of Tamils continue to get rounded up in Colombo and elsewhere. Most are released in due course, but it leads to bitterness. When the Army launched a massive operation against the LTTE in the northern district of Kilinochchi after the Mullaitivu debacle, the offensive was first code-named Hela Beta (Sinhalese Power). Someone woke up and realised the folly of giving such chauvinistic labels to a fighting which the government says is directed against the LTTE and not the Tamils. It was quickly changed to Operation Sath Jaya (Victory of Truth). But it showed the dangers lurking in the shadows. ■

The Colombo-Chennai print media scene

In the ethnically polarised Sri Lankan society the Colombo based print media - books, magazines, newspapers - present a hostile face towards the Tamils. The Express group is an exception. The Tamil daily *Thinakaran* is state owned and toes the official line. *The Sunday Times*, the *The Island* and *The Observer* have no cause for existence except for their invectives against the LTTE. The SLFP and the UNP are two political and social segments of the same Sinhala monolith. Their official organs though mutually antagonistic are united for attacks on the Tamils and their fighting arm, the LTTE.

Associated with these publishing brethren is the *FRONTLINE* of Chennai. Its editorial content steered by the Tamil Nadu born Brahmin N. Ram and his western born wife Susan Ram favour Indian hegemony in South Asia and the maintenance of the status quo in Sri Lanka. Supportive of the cause of minorities the world over the *FRONTLINE* ironically frowns on the LTTE - led freedom struggle. Pro- Sinhala Tamil reporters like Ram Manikkalingam, Neelan Tiruchelvan, D.B.S. Jeyaraj et al find ready sanctuary in its pages.

Some years ago Susan Ram reviewed a vicious anti - LTTE propaganda book in the books section self-exploding the myth of her impartial scholarship. In February 1996 her surrogate sister Anna Brenchley wrote a scurrilous essay in *FRONTLINE* potraying the Women Tigers of Thamil Eelam as bloodthirsty harpies. The picture of a human hand dripping with blood was printed as an illustration to this article. Catherine Mayo who wrote a book in the same vein during the Indian freedom movement was condemned by the Mahatma as the author of gutter journalism. Susan and Anna belong to the same category.

The Sunday Times recently published the Rajani Thiranagama memorial lecture delivered by Radhika Coomaraswamy to a Colombo audience. Without a visit to Jaffna she concludes that the LTTE had not empowered or liberated Jaffna women. She avers that the LTTE had used women fighters to make up for the shortage of male cadres . With the same spurious logic she says "the ideal of the armed virgin is not present in Tamil culture or literature. It is an innovation of the LTTE". She also says that the "LTTE notion of androgyny or making women and men act in the same way is arguably anti- feminine". One answer slashes across the entire gamut of the Radhika thesis: Krishanti Cumaraswamy the rape and murder victim of the Sinhala invader would have turned the tables on her tormentors had she been trained and equipped by the LTTE!

By. K. Kanavathipillai

K. KANAVATHIPPILLAI is former Asst. Under Secretary of the- IBRD. He has sent this comment from Tamil Eelam)

In September 1996 Ram Manikkalingam of the Department of Political Sciences Masachusets Institute of Technology, USA arrived in Colombo with a mandate from the *FRONTLINE* to interview president Chandrika. Manikkalingam is the author of 'Tigerism' a book in which he advances a novel theory "regardless of how vicious or uncompromising Sinhala nationalism maybe Tamil nationalism need not have adopted those same characteristics". From this height of sycophancy Ram has nothing but praise for her democratic record. During the same period the *PRAVADA*, a Sinhala owned Colombo journal has observed that in the event of a military defeat "the Tamil people will be reduced to an abject state, totally without power, where freedom will merely mean the acceptance of whatever is offered"

Rajan Aseervatham, the Colombo power broker who represented Chandrika in the Jaffna peace talks is once again in the news. He had resigned the post of chairman of PERC due to adverse criticism. He is also disillusioned will Chandrika for her speech that she would personally attack the Tamils if the Anuradhapura bo tree is attacked and damaged. He is also upset about the treatment meted out to the Tamils by the Sinhala army. During the time Chandrika was in the political wilderness Aseervatham, her accountant, was one who stood by her and organised the business community in her support. It is also said that he personally roped in Lakshman Kadirgamar and Prof. Pieris as members of the PA cabinet.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act(PTA) designed by the earlier UNP government is now hot news. It had the support of the Colombo print media as it was ipso facto an anti-Tamil legislation. Now that it was turned against the media the cry of press freedom has emerged lone and clear. The PTA was recently used against the News Director of the TNL TV station who was arrested and later released on bail. Due to the resultant uproar the president was compelled to distance herself from her own police. Backing off in typical style she said "it was an action taken by the police. In fact I was not even in the country at the time". But the unwarranted display of force to intimidate the media has evoked continuing protest from local and international media and human rights organisations.

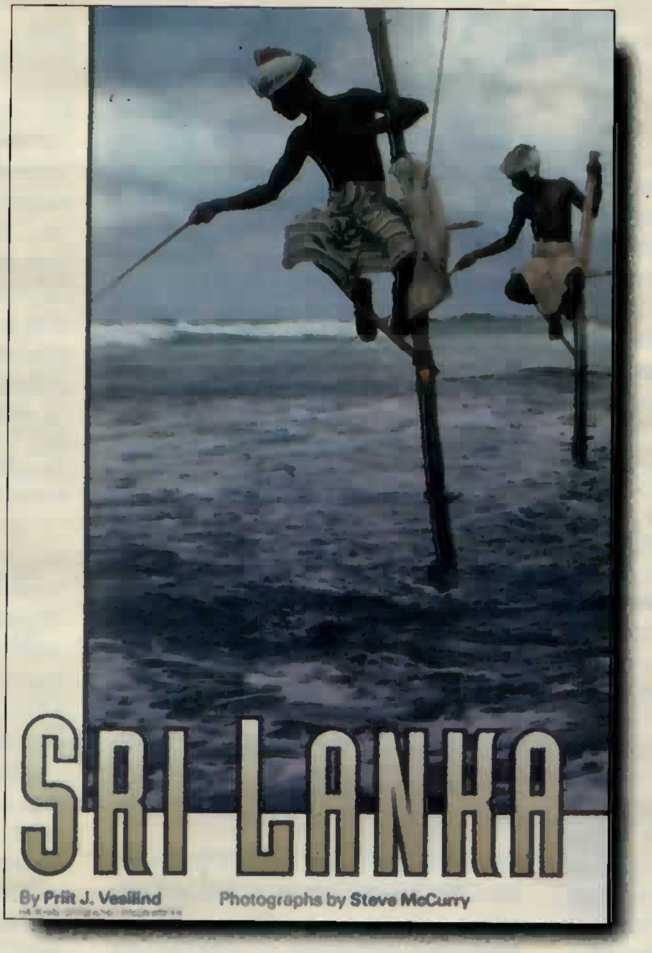
Meanwhile not a single voice had been raised in protest over the use of the provisions of the PTA to incarcerate thousands of Tamils indefinitely without trial in Sri Lankan jails . For the record, Sri Lanka is the only country in the world employing emergency regulations for suppressing a significant minority and ruling over them for a continuous period of thirty years.

That National Geographic article: An alternative view of Sri Lanka

Merton Abbey
London SW19 2UA
18-01-97

Dear Mr Priit J. Vesilind,

The pitch black darkness magnifies the croaking of the crickets and the lizards in the night. The single oil lamp light enlarges the shadows of people huddled together in fear. The tension is crackling in the air. Suddenly the bombs start to rain down from nowhere. Will it land near us? Or will it be some other innocent families home to be hit? The shells continue through the night;like the tears of a child crying in fear of the unknown, of the fear of not getting back to safety of our old colonial master, Britain. Yes that child was me and yes I experienced not just one night of terror but many during my short stay in Jaffna during one summer holiday to see relatives.



The night of terror that I describe above, was due to the Sri-Lankan navy shelling indiscriminately. I cried and cried selfishly wanting to get back to a country I thought was home and left behind family, friends and many others to suffer.

Reading your article on Sri-Lanka in the National Geographic Vol. 191, No. 1 January 1997 I was not surprised by the way in which you portrayed the island. It is the way in which so many westemers and those from the south of the island see it. Many do not try hard enough to get beyond the skin deep exterior that you portrayed. It is, I suppose tedious and probably shocking if any one really tried to understand the background to the situation of today's SriLanka and to find the pictures of destruction and pain, that would be found if visitors and people in the South attempted to visit the North and really see the true East of the island.

"Shanthini"

(real name withheld)

The beautiful picture of fishermen on stilts taken by Steve McCurry really depicts the island of my origin. If you see beyond the fishermen you can see the turbulent sea bashing away at the rocks and the palm trees swaying to and fro just like the Tamils swayed to and fro as they walked in the monsoon rains with little food and water from Jaffna city to safety. The fishermen sit precariously on their stilts just like the Tamils in the North and East have to do as the bombs drop from the sky around.

Were you aware that a whole community of fishermen in the North and East are banned from fishing for their livelihood? Are you aware that as they have no employment, that they cannot buy adequate food and many are displaced living in schools, temples etc and even under the much versatile palmyarah tree? Are you aware that it was mainly families of fishermen that were killed the day that the Sri-Lankan air-force dropped not just one, but six bombs on the surrounding buildings of St Peter and Paul Church, Navally in Jaffna (stated by the ICRC)? Are you aware that it was 120 people who were killed from that incident alone on July 9th 1995? I suppose you were not, as there was no mention of this in your article or the bombing of a school yard during lunch when 750 pupils were in the grounds, 25 pupils were killed immediately and many died later from their injuries as there was a lack of medicine and staff (stated by Medecins Sans

Frontier - Sept. 22nd 1995).

It was mentioned that the LTTE guerrillas demand a separate state for Tamils. This is true, but it was not the LTTE who were the first to bring up the question of separation. In the 1977 election, Tamil politicians stood for election on the grounds that if they were elected they would fight politically or by other means for a separate state. 18 out of the 24 seats contested by Tamil politicians were won and this indicates that in 1977 the Tamil people of Sri Lanka legitimately chose separation as the only answer to their problems. Many of the peaceful demonstrations carried out by the Tamil politicians and Tamils were often met by State aided violence.

When a people are denied their language, as occurred when the Sinhala Only act was introduced in 1956, when young people are denied their right to education as occurred when standardization was introduced (Prior to this entrance to University was on merit alone. With the introduction of standardization, students from certain districts were given priority and those were and are today students from Sinhala areas. A Tamil student who has higher marks than his counterpart Sinhalese student has no chance of gaining entrance to University), when Tamils are pushed out of their traditional homelands by the colonization programmes introduced by successive governments in order to change the demography of an area and there is no investment or development in their areas, what will a people do? Will they sit happily accepting this blatant racism? Will they not get frustrated and angry?

If that was you in that situation, what would you have done? I think you probably would have been one of the first to flee, to seek opportunities abroad as so many well to do Tamils did.

Do you realise that there has been no regular road, rail, sea or air transportation to the North of the island? That people in the North and East of the island live under an economic embargo that prevents vital food and medicines reaching then. The ill and sick cannot receive adequate medical attention because they cannot travel South to the hospitals.

Many Tamils living in Colombo in their posh houses, often in the exclusive Colombo 7, have never experienced one ounce of the problems facing people in the North and East and to them it is an abstract event. You spoke to Radhika Coomaraswamy, who apparently knows of the feelings of the Jaffna people. Does she have relatives in Jaffna who write to her? Or did she deign to visit the recently "liberated" Jaffna? I expect not, and nor has Mr Thiruchelvam as they would have had stones thrown at them for their silence while so many suffered and continue to suffer! Jaffna and the East is alien to many Tarnils who have lived and made their lives in Colombo. Those of us who live outside of the island still have relatives there and receive distressing news from them and when we can, we try to go and visit them in the North and East.

It is mentioned that you saw 3 Black Tigers. Wow, that must have been exciting for you! Do these Black Tigers look darker than others? How were you able to distinguish between them? Did they have horns and a tail? I thought that not even the other Tigers are aware of who the Black Tigers are.

I agree with a comment made on page 125 that the war is fought mainly by the children of the poor. It most definitely is the children of poor families i
the South that conscript in to the arm
as they have no other form of employ
ment and this is the "easiest" way i
which to support their families. Bu
often the families are not informed tha
their loved ones have been killed a
the government would have to pa
compensation and support those fam
ilies. With respect to the Mullaitlv
attack, more that 1400 soldiers wer
killed. Many of the families have yet t
be informed. Many families even wer
as far as Vavuniya to try and see
information. And their dead are n
respected and not given a decent bu
ial. The boys and girls that give u
their lives for the Tamil cause are give
full honours for their sacrifice and ther
was a burial ground named the "sleep
ing matyrs." This was destroyed by th
SriLankan Army,when they took contr
of Jaffna. What would you have wri
ten if the burial grounds of those wh
fought in the second world war ha
been destroyed?

It is mentioned that you saw
Black Tigers. Wow, that must hav
been exciting for you! Do these Blac
Tigers look darker than others? Ho
were you able to distinguish betwee
them? Did they have horns and a tail
I thought that not even the other Tiger
are aware of who the Black Tigers ar

From your article it can be see
that you have not taken the trouble t
really understand the problems in th
country nor have you made an
attempt to do so. You seem to hav
gone around like a shire horse, blin
ered from seeing all around you. Onl
seeing what is put in front of you.

May I end (that is if you have rea
this far) by saying that one bomb i
Colombo is tragic and frightening, b
imagine the daily bombardment an
shelling directed to land anywhere:
school full of children; a church full
refugees; a home; a temple and eve
a Red Cross protected hospital-

I have enclosed some leaflets wi
information on the real Sri-Lanka s
that you may be enlightened,

Please make an effort to reply
my comments.

–Life in the North-East–

ANOTHER VILLAGE HAS FOOD SUPPLY CUT

Sri Lankan troops occupying Valaichchenai (an Eastern Tamil town) have blocked rice supplies from getting past Kumpurumulai checkpoint and through to the Tamil village of Kiran. The people of Kiran are now desperately in need of food with little sign of the government lifting its order to stop all supplies. Under cover of a reporting ban, strong signs are emerging that the government is carrying out a policy of slow genocide of the Tamils in the north and east. This latest measure ties in with similar attempts all over occupied parts to cut off vital food supplies to Tamils in areas not under Sri Lankan military rule.

ROUNDUPS & TORTURE IN MANNAR

Army 'round-up and search' operations are occurring at the rate of once a day in army-controlled Mannar Island. Tamil civilians of the region report that verbal harassment and beatings are common in all such operations. Earlier this week, the armed forces designated an 'Iron Ring' around the Mannar hospital area and everyone within the circle was interrogated with what has become customary cruelty. Witnesses say that in one place, two Tamil civilians were bound, gagged and tortured in front of the others. Public torture is becoming a more and more common army tactic used to intimidate other civilians.

DISPLACED CIVILIANS COME UNDER FIRE

Sri Lankan warplanes are targeting refugee camps where Tamils have gathered after being displaced by Operation Edibala. Families forced from their homes by the army operation are presently huddled together in shelters in a variety of nearby areas. Refugees at Periamadu (Mannar) on 14th February witnessed fighter-jets screeching overhead and dropping bombs. This occurred around midday and lasted for over an hour. There are known to be civilian casualties further details of which are awaited. Attacks like this on Tamil civilians are the reason why Sri Lanka stops journalists entering the north and east.

NEW PROJECT TO DEVELOP TAMIL EELAM

The Tamil Eelam Economic Development Organisation (TEEDOR) in collaboration with the LTTE civil administration in Vanni has distributed credit to 349 farmers in the region to develop agriculture. Each farmer has received Rs. 8000 to carry out an intensive cultivation programme aimed at benefiting people living in the Vanni. People of the Vanni have suffered considerably due to Sri Lanka's embargo on food to the region and therefore home-grown schemes like this TEEDOR venture with LTTE's assistance are designed to ease people's burdens. The grants have been distributed to farmers as far afield as Thunukkai, Pandiankulam, Nannattan, Adampan and Pallamadu.

SCHOOL REOPENS NOW THAT ARMY HAS GONE

Mullaitivu's main school (Maha Vidyalayam) was finally ready to reopen yesterday now that the district is safely in the hands of the LTTE-administration. The school had been closed by the Sri Lankan army which earlier set up a military base in Mullaitivu taking possession of mny public buildings and causing Tamil residents to flee further afield. The LTTE re-took control of Mullaitivu last year to the relief of former residents who have now largely returned. The re-opening ceremony of the school was a very moving event attended by the head of the LTTE's education service. Mr Anbu, raised Tamil Eelam's national flag. School children and parents of Mullaitivu attended the event in large numbers delighted to finally have the school back in their own hands.

3 SOLDIERS KILLED IN INUVIL

Three Sri Lankan soldiers died when LTTE forces overpowered the army patrol on 8th February morning in Inuvil (army-occupied Jaffna). There were no LTTE casualties. Some rifles grenades and accessories were captured. Sri Lanka's military hold on the Jaffna peninsula is becoming increasingly tenuous.

ARMY SETS FIRE TO RICE FIELDS

The Sri Lankan army is making use of the harvest season to disrupt Tamil rice cultivation. Armoured vehicles and tanks are being driven through well-tended fields in parts of Batticaloa and

(continued)

–Life in the North-East–

Vanni destroying months of hard labour and leading to food shortages. The army also burns crops as it passes. This deliberate sabotaging of the economic base of Tamil society by Sinhala troops illustrates Sri Lanka's disregard for the lives and livelihood of the Tamil people.

NOVEL FORMS OF ARMY TORTURE

Torture of Tamils is now widespread in Sri Lankan-occupied parts of the northeast. In Valigamam district last week, Tamil inmates of the Navaly Pulavar refugee camp were taken away by soldiers to their army base. Some of the civilians were beaten to a frenzy. Witnesses say soldiers forced the young men to hold mouthfuls of stones while they were beaten senseless. A 21-year old, Rasiah Satheeswaran, died during his beating. Half of the refugees who were taken have been released, the other half are still in army custody. Relatives fear the worst. Sri Lanka says its forces are liberating the Tamil people.

MASS CIVILIAN EXODUS AGAIN

Another humanitarian crisis is looming as Sri Lankan forces shell and aerial-bomb Tamil border villages on the edges of Vavuniya and Mannar districts in their latest offensive from Feb. 4. Heavy artillery fire is raining down on a number of villages causing civilians to flee in massive waves. Many people are unsure where exactly to escape to since the direction of the offensive is not clear. At the moment there is shelling in various directions aimed deliberately at driving the population away in order that the army can occupy more territory. There is little or no LTTE presence in the targeted areas Meanwhile, many shaken Tamil people have arrived at the Madhu refugee camp which is run by the UNHCR, but this place is now overcrowded. Many newly-arriving displaced people are now sheltering beneath trees on the road, notably in the area of Iranai Illupaikulam Meanwhile, the villages of Kannaddy Kanesapuram, Periathampanai Pandivirichan, Maduroad and Poovilunthan have become totally deserted. The last-arriving residents said the trees have all collapsed and the houses are burning. Sri Lanka routinely denies the deliberate targeting of heavily-populated civilian areas. But the government's block on journalists to the north-east ensures that the scale of the human tragedy goes unreported

TAMIL EDITOR IN JAFFNA WARNED

The editor of a Tamil newspaper in Jaffna has been interrogated and threatened by the Sri Lankan army for reporting the story of an army massacre in which 9 Tamil civilians were gunned down by Sri Lankan soldiers. The editor of "Uthayan", a Tamil-language daily, was threatened many times before military authorities in occupied-Jaffna arrested him and warned him against publishing such incidents without the army's approval. The atrocity in question took place in army-occupied Pannalai (Kara naigar) and was in revenge for an LTTE attack on a military target the same day. A group of Tamil civilians on their way to work was stopped by armed Sinhala troops on the 29 January. The Tamils were ordered to return home immediately. The civilians obeyed and turned back towards the direction of their homes not wanting to antagonise the soldiers. The soldiers then opened fire on them as they walked, killing nine and injuring six more. Three of the dead were women, and one a 15-year old child. Most of those killed were later discovered to be related. Their names are

Sinnapodian	Selvam	(60)
Ratnam	Saraswathy	(45)
Satkunarasa	Puvaneswary	(20)
Nagamuthu	Naguleswaram	(15)
Viravan	Anandamoorthy	(30)
Santhamalli	Anandamoorthy	(28)
Sinnavan	Sanmugam	(65)
Sinnavan	Nagan	(55)
Nagan	Puvandran	(20)

PULLUMALAI IS NOW LIBERATED

The Tamil people of Pullumala have demonstrated their disgust a Sri Lanka's military presence in the homeland by dismantling a recentl abandoned army camp. The militar complex, which is in Batticaloa district, was abandoned not long ag by elite STF troops following a successful LTTE operation on the near by Pulukanavai STF camp. Th Pullumalai base had been constructed by the army in 1990 b amalgamating a number of Tam schools, temples and houses whic at the time caused much resentment among locals. There is a discernible air of relief now that th army has departed from this town.

– Life in the North-East –

SPECIAL PRIVILEGES TO SINHALA FISHERMEN

Sri Lanka's policy of different fishing rights to Tamils and Sinhalese has been extended to the district of Mannar. Now, like in Trincomallee, Tamil fishermen are confined to shallow waters and even so, only during certain hours. Sinhala fishermen, on the other hand, are provided with navy escorts and can fish on the high seas for an unlimited amount of time. Neither can a Tamil fisherman possess an outboard motor above 18 horsepower. Mannar's navy has begun issuing identity documents classifying fishermen according to their ethnic background - Tamil and Sinhalese - so that the appropriate restrictions and privileges can be implemented smoothly. Any breaking of the rules, Tamils have been warned, is punishable by confiscation of boats and nets. In practice, it is also accompanied by physical assault. Many Tamil families depend for their survival on fishing but the current discrimination ensures that their daily catch is insufficient.

MEDICINES DRY UP IN MULLAITIVU

As predicted, the meagre medical stocks supplied in January by the Sri Lankan government to the main Tamil hospital in Mullaitivu have dried up. The stocks themselves arrived way too late. They were in fact the consignment from the last quarter of 1996 but arrived only in mid-January this year. Now even this has gone due to the huge demand and residents of the area will have to endure many months without re-supplies. Even then, there are no guarantees of renewed stocks arriving for the next quarter. Doctors say the few drugs which had arrived in January vanished within a week. And, despite persistent requests to the government from doctors, many urgently needed medicines did not even show up, such as Primaquin, Chloroquin, Amoxlin, Tetracylin and various antibiotics. There are growing signs that Sri Lanka is deliberately imposing hardships on Tamils in unoccupied territory in order to facilitate its military strategy.

DISPLACED CIVILIANS AGAIN UNDER FIRE

Sri Lankan warplanes together for the second successive day targeting refugee camps where Tamils were gathered. Tamil families forced from their homes by the Sri Lankan army's Operation Edibala were presently in shelters in a number of nearby areas. Refugee camps at Periamadu (Mannar) for the past two days have been bombarded from the skies by Sri Lankan planes. Sri Lanka prevents journalists entering the Tamil northeast where they might report such incidents.

THOUSANDS DETAINED IN TRINCO

Thousands of Tamils coerced by the Sri Lankan military into travelling by ship to Jaffna have been forced into detention centres at Trincomallee (in the East) owing to delays. The overcrowded conditions of the camps are described as horrendous by witnesses who say people are packed together like firewood, breathing into each other's faces. The conditions are identical to those faced by Tamil civilians in Vavuniya's notorious camps which have come under heavy criticism from human rights groups. Meanwhile, most of the people held in Trincomallee, including children, have been ordered by soldiers to go to Jaffna after they had travelled across the Thandikulam military checkpoint. The government forces Tamil people to go to Jaffna in order to present to the world the image of Tamils voluntarily choosing Sri Lankan army rule. There are currently 7000 Tamils detained in Trincomalle destined for Jaffna.

ARMY HIJACKS BUSES DAILY

Sri Lankan soldiers occupying the Tamil district of Batticaloa are continuing to steal public buses for their own military use. At first Sinhala troops only took them from overnight parking lots but now the practice has spread to buses which are en route and loaded with Tamil passengers. Typically, soldiers will wave down a passenger bus and at gunpoint order passengers off. The vehicle is then promptly driven away leaving travellers stranded on the road. The practice now occurs daily at the Welikanda junction while passengers are part-way between places as far off as Vavuniya and Colombo.

YOUTH TORTURED TO DEATH

A young Tamil man has been found beaten to death after torture at the hands of the Sinhala army occupying Thenmaradchy. The death of Vijayanar (29) has caused deep anxiety and distress among the Tamil residents of his home town, Meesalai. Relations between civilians and the Sri Lankan army in the occupied territories are becoming more and more strained as cases of abuse, torture and murder of innocent boys and girls escalate.

– Life in the North-East –

TAMILS FORCED TO CLEAN TOILETS

Sri Lankan 'elite' STF soldiers at Palukamam army camp have made it compulsory for Tamils in the area to clean the camp's toilets. Once a week, the males of the village are summoned to the site and ordered to carry out the lavatory-cleaning service free of charge. The practice originates from the time of ancient Sinhala kings who exacted the same service - called 'Rajakariya' - from their subjects. Sri Lanka tells the world that all ethnic communities on the island can expect equal treatment under its rule.

NUTRITION CENTRE AT MULANKAVIL

Nutritional schemes started in the LTTE-run Pooneryn area are beginning to bear fruit, with children's' health showing improvements. The Mulankavil Development Society's "Accelerated Development Scheme" continues its good work by opening a new nutrition and child-care centre in Mulankavil. The intention is to target malnutrition among the young and poor. Malnutrition has become rife as a consequence of Sri Lanka's block on food and medicine to Tamil regions. The new centre, actively supported by the LTTE, hopes to give special care to those worst affected, including children whose parents have been killed by Sri Lankan forces.

TAMIL VILLAGE UNDER HEAVY ATTACK

A Tamil village came under heavy fire from Sri Lankan forces, when a 20,000-strong Sri Lankan force which set off from Vavuniya on Feb. 4 ceaselessly pounded the village of Chettikulam (west of Vavuniya). Early reports suggest there is already a significant civilian death-toll with local families taken by surprise and young and old completely disorientated. But the mainly aerial raids continue unabated. Other nearby villages have also reported heavy attacks.

INDEPENDENCE DAY ORDEAL

Sri Lankan "Independence" Day was predictably an ordeal for many Tamils who underwent continual harassment from security forces in virtually all parts of the island. In the week leading to Independence Day (4th February) more than 50 Tamil boys and girls were arrested in Colombo and near-by suburbs. Having a Tamil name is these days sufficient grounds for arrest under Sri Lanka's much-abused Prevention of Terrorism Act. Most innocent Tamils who are rounded up find themselves imprisoned in cells alongside hardened criminals and given no details of how long they will be detained. Despite growing agitation in various prisons, authorities have continued to ignore the predicament of these Tamil people. Welikada jail is said to be crammed full at the moment and many accounts are now emerging of ill-treatment and abuse of prisoners.

VICTIMS OF ARMY SHELLING

Sri Lankan artillery shells fired from Mavadivempu army camp (Batticaloa) have killed an 11-year old Tamil boy, Karuppaiyah Sriskumar. A middle-aged man, Sadadcharam Perinparajan, also died. Three others critically injured are from the same family :- M. Rebecca (a 2-year old baby girl), M. Ruban (5), and M. Thayapathy (26). The following six people were also badly wounded :- A. Vigendran (38), S. Selvam (68), M. Sinnamma (70), T. Thevakumar (21), K. Kapirmani (45) and P. Veluppillai (40).

FARMERS GIVEN LOANS

The Mullaitivu District Tamil Economic Development Society has given loans to farmers to intensify paddy cultivation in this LTTE-administered region. 57 cultivators from Mullaitivu proper were given a total of Rs. 555,000, another 77 cultivators from Manal Aru were granted Rs. 605,000 while 83 cultivators from Oddusuddan received Rs. 666,000. The LTTE administration has worked hand in hand with the Society in its efforts to promote the present and future well-being of the Tamil people.

ARMY TAKES REVENGE ON CIVILIONS

Sri Lanka reacted typically to its military losses Feb. 1 by non-stop shelling of Tamil residential areas. Artillery fire rained heavily day-and-night from the army camps located at Paranthan, Elephant Pass and Kilinochchi damaging houses, killing cattle and demolishing trees. Tamil civilians, uprooted once more, left their homes in panic after the firing.

AIRFORCE TARGETS BUSY TOWN

A Sri Lankan 'Puccara' fired three rockets into a crowed Tamil town of Mullaitivu on February 3 destroying many buildings and creating terror among the locals of Pudukudiyiruppu,

– Life in the North-East –

a thickly-populated residential Tamil area in Mullaitivu. The attack came at 9.30 am while schools, offices and markets were swarming with people. After flying a few rounds selecting targets the fighter jet opened fire. This attack on civilians comes soon after Sri Lanka suffered significant military losses on Feb. 1.

ARMY CAMP FALLS TO LTTE

LTTE fighters overran Mavadivempu army camp in the East killing 30 Sri Lankan troops. The said camp came under LTTE fire just after midnight on February 1 and within 20 minutes fell into LTTE control. In addition to the 30 Sri Lankan troops killed, many others are had fled. 15 LTTE fighters lost their lives. A military-tractor was destroyed by LTTE demolition units and an array of sophisticated weapons and accessories was captured.

LTTE'S ARTS MAGAZINE -50TH ISSUE

The golden issue of the popular Tamil-monthly "Velichcham" is now out on the news-stands of Tamil Vanni. The journal, published by the Arts and Culture department of the LTTE, attracts a wide readership and has become famous for its poignant articles, reviews, short stories, artwork and poetry. Contributors hail from all over Tamil Eelam and the journal has earned a central place in Tamil Eelam's rich cultural heritage. In this, its 50th edition, the journal inscribes a personal message from Tamil Eelam's national leader Mr V. Prabhakaran, in which he congratulates the dedicated efforts of the editorial board and public contributors.

POLICE CHECK-POINT OVERRUN

Six Sri Lankan security force personnel were killed when LTTE forces attacked a checkpoint in Valaichchenai. In a 10-minute operation the LTTE totally overran the police checkpoint. The site was destroyed while arms, ammunition and accessories were taken.

UNKNOWN VIRUS IN KILINOCHCHI

An unknown virus has broken out in Kilinochchi provoking concern among doctors. The virus presents a further threat to the health of Tamil people who are already exposed to a range of infectious diseases due to Sri Lanka's block on medicines to Tamil territories. The new viral fever has been spotted at a variety of places in Kilinochchi but without proper drugs or equipment doctors say they are powerless to study it or cure it. However, they have no doubts that the outbreak is attributable to Sri Lanka's long-standing medicine ban which has also made many Tamil people of the Vanni region fall victim to malaria, cerebral malaria, septicaemia, diarrhoea and water-borne diseases. Doctors warn that many people will die unless the "inhuman" food and medical ban is done away with immediately.

TRINCO: TAMILS BEATEN UP

The port city of Trincomallee is today the scene of arcane rituals conducted by the Sri Lankan army. Brigadier Kularatne, the military commander in charge of the area, organises daily interrogations in which Tamils are paraded before 'masked informers' who hand-pick people for beatings by the army. The army's efforts recently focused on the Tamil residents of Main Street, Centre Road and Ehamparam Street who were all made to assemble at the local bus stand. Masked men were then sent down the aisles singling out men, women and children one by one. Those pulled out were beaten in front of the others as soldiers shouted at them to confess to "terrorist connections". Residents of Kaskisa Road, Rajavarothayam Road, Saratha Lane and Moor Road underwent a similar ordeal in front of the local Hindu temple. Sometimes the army invites Sinhala residents to watch such spectacles which have now literally become a daily occurrence. Colombo-based Sinhala journalists have shown little interest in reporting or investigating such incidents preferring to rely wholly on defence ministry statements.

FILM FOOTAGE

Film footage of last July's Mullaitivu battle in which the LTTE overran a massive Sri Lankan military base is now available to the people of Tamil Vanni. Operation "Ceaseless Waves" is depicted here in all its military splendour from the planning stage to its actual conduct. The footage - which also shows Sri Lankan air-sea reinforcements being meticulously repelled - illustrates decisively that the LTTE is today a highly disciplined and professional army in its prime. The LTTE has always been open about its military losses as well as successes. The release of such video footage to the public demonstrates an openness in military matters which contrasts sharply with the Sri Lankan government's regular concealment of military news and casualty figures from its own population.

–Life in the North-East–

MORE YOUTHS JOIN LTTE

Students in Tamil Vanni are gravitating to the LTTE's ranks in record numbers. Every day there arrives a stream of new recruits, with Puthukudiyiruppu (Mullaitivu) currently generating the highest rate of new cadres. The general opinion among students seems to be that freedom has to be secured from occupying troops before any meaningful education can begin.

SINHALA PRISONERS SHIPPED TO JAFFNA

A new government initiative to ship Sinhalese prisoners from Colombo jails to the Jaffna peninsula is underway. The placing of hardened Sinhalese criminals to live among the ordinary Tamil population of Jaffna has caused intense worry among residents who have reported several incidents of rape and murder by the armed forces since they occupied Jaffna in 1995. The criminals are brought from overcrowded jails in Sri Lanka's western province and then settled in Jaffna. They are then free to roam the streets of Jaffna. The intention can only be to intimidate and terrorise the Tamil population. The project, concealed by the government's reporting ban, has ensured that the quality of life of Tamils living under Sri Lankan occupation deteriorates by the day.

ARMY WIPES OUT NORTHEASTERN TREES

The Sri Lankan military is carrying out a covert tree-demolition project in captured areas of the Northeast. The ecology of the region has been destroyed since the government's military operations resumed in 1995. Some 2.5 million trees have so far been wiped out and the army is now ordering Tamils to cut down mango trees growing in their own gardens. In Jaffna city, ancient stately trees planted down roadsides by the ex-British colonial administration have been cut to stumps. The bizarre government scheme is going on apace hidden by restricted news reporting from the north-east. It demonstrates again that an organised policy of crippling the Tamil nation is being commandeered.

22 FEBRUARY 1997 DAY OF MOURNING FOR MANNAR VICTIMS

The aftershock of Wednesday's boat tragedy off Mannar is being felt today in Tamil Eelam where all public places remain closed as a mark of respect. Shops, schools and homes are festooned with black flags in an overwhelming response to the call for a national day of mourning by the LTTE-administration. No vehicles are travelling the roads and public condolence messages are displayed on big boards at main junctions. For the time being, people have shown a willingness to forget their own miseries and share the sorrow of the families of the mainly women and children who drowned that night. The dead were Tamil civilians trying to flee the latest Sri Lankan army advance west from Vavuniya which has already driven tens of thousands of Tamil residents away from their homes in panic. Those aboard the over-crowded vessel which capsized on Wednesday were hoping to reach the safety of Tamil Nadu before Sri Lankan troops could arrive.

HIGHWAY ORDEALS FOR TAMILS

The four main highways out from Batticaloa - leading to Badulla, Kalmunai, Amparai and Polonnaruwa - have become routes replete with dangers for Tamils. Sri Lankan soldiers routinely stop and interrogate ordinary Tamil citizens with the customary dose of racial and physical abuse often intended to make their journeys as inconvenient as possible. Also, when the mood catches the soldiers, these roads (except the one to Amparai) are closed off to Tamil travellers for lengthy periods without any notice given. It does not make a difference to the soldiers how urgent or necessary people's journeys to other parts might be.

"EDIBALA 2" - 10,000 MORE DISPLACED

The second phase of Sri Lanka's military push westward from Vavuniya has sent thousands more Tamil residents scattering to towns further afield. The army, having set up sentry points in the areas it has occupied, shells continually in all directions killing cattle and destroying trees and crops as well as uprooting civilians. Families in Koddaiadampan, Isaimalai, Thalvu and Murunkan have subsequently been forced to begin the long trek towards the refugee camps at Maddu Church and Thatchanamadu which are already overcrowded. So far Operation Edibala has turned well over 10,000 Tamils into 'refugees' in their own land. But with effective news-screening from the northern theatre of war Sri Lanka ensures that the scale of the humanitarian crisis remains unknown.

More than 5 lakhs attend pro-LTTE rally in Madras

More than five lakhs of people attended the mass rally of the Eelam Tamil Protection conference organised by the Pattali Makkal Kadchi (PMK) in Chennai on February 2, despite government warnings.

A report in THE HINDU said:

Speakers at the Eelam Tamil Protection conference, organised by the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) here on February 2 said that they could not be frightened by threats of seditious charges for voicing support to the Sri Lankan Tamils and assailed the Centre's stand on the Sri Lankan Tamils issue.

Ridiculing attempts to portray those championing the cause of Tamils as anti-nationals, and challenging the State Government to carry out its threat of reprisals, the participants commended the role of the LTTE in the ethnic struggle, demanded Tamil Eelam and urged the Government of India to intervene and bring about a speedy and peaceful solution to the problem.

While the rally avoided references to the LTTE, possibly because of the Government's warning, speakers could not restrain themselves from eulogising the Tigers.

The PMK founder, Dr. Ramadoss, pledged his party's support to stoke the present ``embers" of the enthic struggle into a major conflagration with the support of people.

This was the clear-cut message he gave to the expatriate Tamils in Canada and Switzerland during his recent visit after they voiced their anguish over the absence of any reaction in Tamil Nadu over the killing of Tamils in Sri Lanka.

Dr. Ramadoss asked the Chief Minister, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, to clarify what he meant by his recent claim that the policy of the Centre and Tamil Nadu, vis-a-vis, the Sri Lankan Tamils issue was the same.

``Does Mr. Karunanidhi agree with the Centre's winking at the

`slaughter of Tamils' when the eight crore Tamils in the world were looking forward to him to help find a solution to the ethnic issue?" he argued.

பாட்டாளி மக்கள் கட்சியின்
பாதுகாப்பு

Dr. Ramadoss mounted a scathing attack on the Tamil Maanila Congress for questioning the PMK's bonafides. Terming the TMC as old wine in a new bottle, Dr. Ramadoss said that the party would disappear in the State the moment it was pushed down from the shoulders of the DMK, citing how Congressmen were instrumental in dislodging the DMK from power in 1989 by using the LTTE card.

Calling for lifting the ban on the LTTE, Mr. George Fernandes, MP and Samata Party president, said that two falsehoods were spread in India and abroad. One was that the LTTE had to be targeted for the present Sri Lankan situation forgetting that the Tigers came into the picture only after every possible move to resolve the ethnic issue was thwarted.

The second falsehood was that after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination the whole situation had changed. Rajiv Gandhi's death was a tragedy like any other death elsewhere. Should the death of one person, however, mighty he might have been, be the cause for a policy change and should not national interests be governed by the security considerations? he asked.

New security dimensions had arisen now in Sri Lanka as a result of its army being trained by the U.S., Israel and Pakistan. Did this not pose a serious threat to our security? Could the demand for the Indian intervention to bring about a peaceful solution to the ethnic issue in Sri Lanka be regarded as an act of treachery? Or was it an act of subversion to call for protection of Sri Lankan Tamils now at the receiving end of terrible violence at the hands of Sri Lankan Army? he wondered.

Mr. Dheeran, PMK president, said if Tamils going abroad were respected it was all due to the valour of the LTTE leader, Prabhakaran. Questioning the rationale of the Centre's decision to wash off its hands and its claim that the ethnic issue was a internal problem of Sri Lanka, Mr.Dheeran said that seven lakh Tamils had become refugees in their own homeland and hundreds were crossing into Tamil

Nadu fearing for their lives.

The PMK was prepared for any sort of sacrifice in the cause of Sri Lankan Tamils and any amount of threat would not deter the party from extending support to the Tamils. Citing an analogy, he said that there were those who were opposed to the showing of solidarity with the Sri Lankan Tamils on the ground that they constituted a minority in the Island. If Hindi speaking people, a majority in India were to adopt the same yardstick and attack other linguistic groups would the Government remain quiet? Tamil Eelam was the only solution to the ethnic struggle, he said.

At the PMK rally: (From left to right) Ms. Madeline Michael, from Switzerland, Mr. K.M.Veerabhadran from South Africa and Dr.Ramadoss.

Ms. Madhalin Michael, representing Tamil Eelam Solidarity Orgnisation in Switzerland, said the Tamil struggle in Sri Lanka was for justice and equality. The ethnic struggle and denial of basic human rights of Tamils had become an international issue.

Mr. K. M. Veerabharan, a South African national, wondered why India which slapped economic sanctions against South Africa during the apartheid days, was hesitant to do the same now in respect of Sri Lanka for violating basic human rights and killing Tamils. He said that the LTTE was only trying to protect the Tamils and he did not know why the whole world was keeping quiet even after witnessing the merciless killings of Tamils in Sri Lanka. The only solution to the Tamils problem was self determination, he said.

Mr. Ajit Singh Baines, President of Human Rights Commission, Punjab and former Chief Justice of Punjab-Haryana High Court, said that the LTTE was forced to come on the scene and take up arms only after the Sri Lankan Government began to deny Tamils economic, political and social justice. The will of the people anywhere could not be crushed by arms and cited how the USA and Pakistan came to grief in Vietnam and the erstwhile East Bengal respectively while attempting to suppress the peoples' aspirations.

Mr. V. Anaimuthu, Organising Secretary, Periyar Marxist party, stressed the need for indianising and internationalising the ethnic struggle in Sri Lanka to facilitate a speedy solution.

Mr. Dalit Ezhil malai, PMK general secretary and other district office bearers of PMK were among those who addressed the conference.

The conference adopted resolutions urging the Government of India to recognise the struggle for Eelam as a national liberation struggle and extend security and aid to it as it had done in the case of other nationality struggles and make the Sri Lankan Government to immediately declare a ceasefire and withdraw its armed forces from the ``traditional homeland" of the Tamils.

Condemning the war against Tamils, the meeting appealed to the United Nations to intervene in the ongoing ethnic crisis and stop the genocide of Tamil race and wanted the Centre and the State Government to extend all assistance to the Tamil refugees as per the U.N. charter.

Pro-LTTE Indian Editor arrested in Chennai

NEW DELHI, Feb 22 (AFP) - Police have arrested the editor of a popular magazine in southern India for allegedly helping Tamil Tiger guerrillas in Sri Lanka, the Indian Express daily said Saturday.

A.S. Mani, chief of the Tamil-language weekly **Netrikkan**, was arrested on Friday in Madras, capital of Tamil Nadu state, after a raid on his house.

A spokesman said Mani was a sympathiser of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) group, fighting a protracted war for independence in northern and eastern Sri Lanka where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated.

"Several incriminating articles were found including cellular phones hired for LTTE members, LTTE propaganda material, photographs of LTTE leader Prabhakaran and LTTE pocket calendars," he said.

Tamil Nadu is home to some 55 million Indian Tamils and several groups actively support the Tamil Tiger guerrilla campaign. More than 50,000 people have died in fighting since 1972.

Letters

Publish or Perish!

Some months ago I openly challenged the P.A. Government of Sri Lanka via Foreign Minister Mr. Lakshman Kadirgamar [Ref. HS-October '96] to publish the entirety of letters exchanged between them and the LTTE during the peace-talks, of January to April I 1995. It is most disappointing to find that no tangible progress seems to have been made in this direction.

If, as the government has repeatedly declared recently, the purpose of their war. is ultimately to attain peace through renewed talks with the LTTE assisted by possible intermediaries from abroad, the contents of the earlier letters are most vital for everyone concerned and involved, mainly, the promoters on all sides, and also the sympathetic international community, to objectively, analyse and find out why the 1995 talks failed, so that future talks could be more suitably, structured and conducted.

Peace in Sri Lanka is meant for the people of all groups, levels and shades- not merely for the leaders of the warring parties and the, politicians. Peace is a primary public need, and the public will be the principal beneficiaries or losers if the components of peace are not, once and for all, properly designed and constructed. The basis of peace in Sri Lanka will affect the outside world too. These facts amply substantiate the need to publish and publicise the said details of the failures at the most recent peace-talks. And it is vital that they should he published as soon as possible, with original letters in Tamil and Sinhala or English, and also their authentic translations.

If their publication cannot be accomplished by, the Government's, agencies within the next three months or so, due to the usual civil service bureaucracy, I believe that independent organisations such as International Alert or Century House who have been consistently working for the promotion of peace in Sri Lanka might willingly do so, if a complete set of the basic material is banded over to them by the Sri Lankan High Commissioner, with minimum costs.

Finally, the longer the P.A. Government delays taking action on this most important matter, the more intense, I do think, will be diplomatic and political pressures from the world community, and from tile local parliamentarians themselves, in the coming months, which will result in the untimely demise of. the PA. Government with consequent prolongation of the peace process itself

Prof. Kopan Mahadeva

'Sinhala only' at home English only abroad

Editor
Hot Spring

There is a small body of people in UK who call themselves the International Foundation of Sri Lankans and acting as a front for Sinhala Buddhist chauvinism. They should be asked to answer the following questions:_

1. who was responsible for the emigration from Sri Lanka of 500,000 Tamil refugees ?

2. What are the one million Sinhala economic refugees like the secretary of this body Dr.Asoka Thenabadu going to do after the war is over ? Will they go back to their country as they expect the Tamils to do ?

3. What is Dr.Thenabadu and the other million Sinhalese doing in the West after evicting the Tamils with their "Sinhala only" policy and waves of communal violence ? Why did they have to go to the West to avoid the "Sinhala only" policy, to educate their children in English language after forcing Sinhala down the throats of the Tamils ?

4. Do you deny that the Sinhala nation is collectively responsible for the sufferings of the people of the Tamil nation and the ethnic cleansing of their homelands in the northest?

Recently, the Anglican Canon Nicholas Frayling wrote to THE INDEPENDENT saying "Britain owes Ireland an apology" for what happened on the bloody Sunday 25 years ago, which started all the trouble. Dr.Thenabadu and his "international" Sri Lankans might as well ask for public forgiveness from the Tamils for all the bloody Sundays and Fridays that the Tamils went through and continue to go through since 1958.

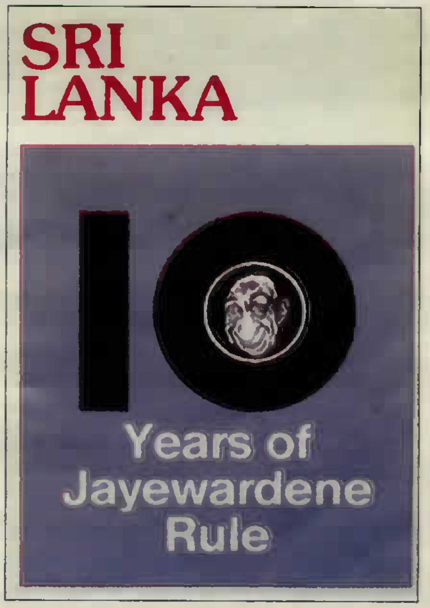
Lt.Col.Anton Selvadurai
Stoke-on-Trent
U.K

JAYEWARDENE'S YEARS OF POWER

A Contemporary Assessment (1987)

Part III

(Continued from previous issue)


SRI LANKA

10 Years of Jayewardene Rule

S.Sivanayagam

The fact that a 7-year political dormancy separated Junius Richard Jayewardene's years of power and his death at the age of 90 may have had something to do with the charitable references, and the flattering obituaries and cosmetic acclaim that he earned at his death.

Public memory being what it is, short, and often selective, HOT SPRING brings to its readers the third part of a contemporary assessment and narrative of Jayewardene's years of power, written and published in 1987.

IN a 40-page booklet, titled 10 YEARS OF JAYEWARDENE RULE, the author S. Sivanayagam covered the years 1977 - 1987, and records a chunk of history that was both dark and depressing, and illustrative of the ignoble style of Jayewardene's governance.

……

If any State could virtually declare war against its own citizens, and in a part of its own territory (Jaffna) and do it unashamedly, that happened in Sri Lanka in the year 1981. Today, six years later, it is continuing to happen. But also, it is a more ferocious, but a pathetic scenario. In early July, as this is being written, here is President Jayewardene completing 10 years of rule this month, trying to invade his own territory (Jaffna) by land, sea and air!

What happened in 1981 ? Writing in the summer of 1984, Nancy Murray, a member of the Campaign against Racism and Fascism, and of the Council of the Institute of Race Relations, says:

> "By 1981, the Liberation Tigers had killed perhaps twenty policemen, many of them notorious torturers. In April and may of 1981, following the Neerveli bank robbery, twenty seven men were arrested, and at least twenty-two of them, according to an Amnesty International report, tortured in a number of ways and then chained to walls at the Elephant Pass army camp and elsewhere for six months at a time. Against the background of relentless state repression, Jayewardene's effort to defuse the situation by calling elections for District Development Councils was probably doomed from the start, even if he had not aroused Tamil suspicions by sending up a contingent of 300 specially-trained Sinhalese policemen to oversee the election proceedings in Jaffna,
>
> "The run-up to the elections was predictably violent. Tamil youth groups denounced the TULF for going along with the elections - they viewed the DDCs as toothless and TULF cooperation as a sell-out, On 24 May, a UNP candidate was assassinated and the army went on a rampage of looting and torture. And then, on 31 May, an unidentified gunman fired some shots at an election meeting, and the tense atmosphere exploded into State-sponsored mayhem. With several high - ranking Sinhalese security officers and two Cabinet Ministers, Cyril Mathew and Gamini Dissanayake (both self-confessed Sinhala supremacists), both present in the town, uniformed security men and plainclothes thugs carried out some well-organised acts of destruction. They burned to the ground certain chosen targets - including the Jaffna Public Library, with its 95,000 volumes and priceless manuscripts, a Hindu temple, the office and machinery of the independent Tamil newspaper Eelanadu, the house of the MP for Jaffna. the headquarters of the TULF, and more than 100 shops and markets. Four people were killed outright. No mention of this appeared in the national newspapers, not even the burning of the Library, the symbol of the Tamils' cultural identity.
>
> "The government delayed bringing

in emergency rule until 2 June, by which time key targets had been destroyed. On 4 June, emergency rule was extended throughout the country, and lifted five days later. Meanwhile, the government had no intention of postponing elections, despite the fact that the signs were hardly auspicious, It was determined to win at least one seat in Tamil territory. On the morning of polling day, TULF leaders were arrested; and they were released, with no explanation given. After the elections, several of the ballot boxes were tampered with, and some were never produced for counting. But in spite of this, TULF won all the seats...." *(The State against the Tamils, Sri Lanka. Racism and theauthoritarian State. Institute forrace Relations, London, 1984).*

Footnote : Senior Tamil polling officers were replaced a few days before the elections by Government party supporters from the South. Six ballot boxes were found missing, one of which was later discovered in the hotel room occupied by a Cabinet Minister!

Further attacks on Indian Tamits

If the Jaffna calamity cum fiasco took place ih May-June, July brought that crazy reversal of Parliamentary traditions that we have already told you about - the Government motion of no-faith on the Tamil Leader of the Opposition. The inflammatory speeches made on that occasion were soon printed and distributed widely in the Sinhalese areas, and these led to new tensions in August, resulting in rioting in several areas, particularly Ratnapura and Negombo. The victims were mostly Tamils of Indian origin. On 17 August, a state of emergency was declared and a government communique stated : "Within the last ten days, seven deaths by violence, 196 incidents of arson, and 35 incidents of looting have been reported by the police... It has also been reported that there has been damage to estates and estate property, particularly in the Ratnapura district". *The Hindu* of August, 21, reported: "Several thousand Indian estate workers had to trekthroughs nake-infested jungles and cross high hills to escape persecution by organised armed gangs of hoodlums over the past 15 days, according to eye witness reports. The refugees presented a pitiable sight, dragging their weary feet with children in arms and little bundles of clothes slung over their backs". An Indian journalist, S. Venkat Narayan of *India Today* was detained by the police at Kahawatte and his camera impounded. A few days later an Indian national from Tamil Nadu, S. Dhanapathi, who was a member of a pilgrim party to the Hindu holy shrine of Kataragama in the southeast of the island, was axed to death, by Sinhalese hoodlums, while he was waiting for a shave in a barber shop. On August 21, President Jayewardene imposed a Press censorship.

British journalist Brian Eads who visited Sri Lanka wrote in The Observer, London, of 20 September:

> "...It is clear that subsequent violence in July and August, which was directed against Sri Lanka Tamils in the east and south of the country, and Indian Tamil tea estate workers in the central region, was not random. It was stimulated, and in some cases organized, by members of the ruling UNP, among them intimates of the President. In all 25 people died, scores of women were raped, and thousands were made homeless, losing all their meagre belongings. But ine summer madness, which served the dual purpose of quietening Tamil calls for Eelam, that is, a separate state, and taking the minds of the Sinhalese electorate off a deepening economic crisis is only one of the blemishes on the face of the island. Since Jayewardene came to power four years ago, a system of what his critics call "State Terrorism" has brought an Ulster-style situation in the Tamii-majority areas of the north and east..."

President Jayewardene had pre-empted this kind of criticism. Adroitly, he side-stepped, freeing himself of all personal blame by issuing an ecclesiastical censure on his own partymen. Addressing the executive committee of his party on 4 September, Mr. Jayewardene poured forth this anguish. He said :

> "I speak more in sorrow than in anger Recent events throughout the island, North, Centre and South show that the religion we profess does not seem to influence for the good some of our people I regret that, some members of my party made speeches in Parliament and outside that encourage violence and murders, rapes and arson that have been committed... I must have reasons to be proud of the party of which I am the leader. If I cannot, it is better for me to retire from the leadership of this party and let those who believe that the harming of innocent people and property that has happened recently is the way to solve the

problems that face this multi-racial, multi- religious and multi -caste society, take over the leadership of the party."

In fact, there was an urgent need to polish up images and do some political interior decoration, because the Queen was coming. Queen Elizabeth was to be special guest at the government's celebrations to mark 50 years of universal franchise in the island in October. Confident as he probably was, that Leader of the Opposition Mr. Amirthalingam had been sufficiently "softened up" by the barrage of abuse and threats that his partymen launched on him in Parliament, he invited him for face-to-face talks. To use diplomatic language, Mr. Jayewardene was setting in motion fresh initiatives to settle outstanding problems of the Tamil community.

Special invitee

It was characteristic of Mr. Jayewardene's private style of functioning that he extended a special invitation to a non-political professor of Political Science in farway Canada to help in the negotiation process. The special invitee was Professor A.J. Wilson of New Brunswick University who was of course a Sri Lankan, a Tamil, and the son-in -law of the widely respected Tamil leader S.J.V. Chelvanayakam Q.C., the founder of the Tamil United Liberation Front and for twenty five years earlier the propagator of a Federal solution for Sri Lanka. On 18 August the first of the meetings, later to get described as "amity talks" took place at the President's official residence. Those present, apart from the main actors, included : Minister of Trade Lalith Athulathmudali, Minister of Education and Youth Affairs Ranil Wickremasinghe, Minister of Transport M.H. Mohamed, Minister of Justice Nissanka Wijeratne, Minister of Rural Development S. Thondaman, and Dr. A.J. Wilson. The Jayewardene-TULF honeymoon had begun, and like all honeymoons did not last for long.

(to be continued)

Sri Lanka says it needs landmines

Governments and pressure groups hailed as a success a forum hosted by Austria on Feb. 14, to start the ball rolling for a total ban on landmines worldwide, according to a Reuter report from Vienna.

"The world is inexorably on the path to a total ban on anti-personnel mines," Jody Williams, International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) coordinator, said in a statement. "This conference has demonstrated that a large number of governments will be prepared to sign a ban treaty before the end of the year", she said.

But Cuba, Ecuador, South Korea and SRI LANKA said they would continue to use landmines for security, the ICBL said.

It may be mentioned that non-combatant Tamil civilians are the ones who are usually the victims of landmines, in the Sri Lanka government's war against the Tamils in the northeast.

The three-day Vienna conference which ended on February 14, and was attended by over 100 government experts, was part of the "Ottawa process" begun last October at a SO-nation forum hosted by Canada.

Over 100 million land mines are reported to lie buried in 64 countries around the world. According to U.N.statistics land mines kill or maim a person every 20 minutes, or 25,000 people a year.

Sri Lankan doctor on sex charges

A "sexually frustrated" doctor was on February 4 suspended from practice for six months after being found guilty of assaulting his secretary for sexual gratification.

The Medical Practitioners Board found Dr. Nihal Senarath Heenatigala had subjected his 19 year old receptionist who was also his patient to a series of "bizarre" acts and innuendoes at his Noble Park Practice.

The Board found that between November 1991 and May 1992 Dr. Heenatigala, a father of three.

INSISTED the girl, who cannot be named, sit and stand on his back as a form of treatment.

TWICE begged her to treat his haemorrhoids with a laser while exposing his buttocks to her.

TOLD her that he dreamed he had raped her.

SEXUAL assaulted her while she sat on his back.

ASKED her to wear see through underwear.

COMMENTED that a Patient offered him sexual favours for serepax prescriptions.

Dr. Heenatigala who allegedly told his secretary that he found his treatment stimulating, allegedly instructed her not to say anything because they would both get into trouble.

Presiding member Dr. Kerry Breen said that despite Dr. Heenatigala's denials the incidents ever took place and their bizarre nature, the board believed the women's evidence and found they did occur.

"It was simply a vehicle for sexual stimulation." Dr Breen said.

"The treatment provided by (the girl) was completely worthless.

"It was simply a medium the doctor used for touching and massaging and having his body in contact with her body."

The board reprimanded Dr. Heenatigala and ordered him to be assessed by a psychiatrist and undergo 12 months of psychological treatment.

SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT AND THE LIBERATION TIGERS

A political statement from Tamil Eelam

By "Manivannan"
from Tamil Eelam
Translated from Tamil

Today the Tamil people could realise the extent of the popularity of the Liberation Tigers in foreign countries by the very fact that the Sri Lankan Government uses all its potential communications media in thwarting this popularity of the Tigers in the outside world. It is therefore possible to understand that the growth in the popularity of the Tigers has greatly affected the Government. In this war of propaganda the Sri Lankan Governmnt has a great advantage: the disposal of immense Government funds; the service of specialists; the control of all internal communications media; advice and guidance from local and international military experts which give an undeniable advantage over the Tigers in the war front, But the strength of the Liberation Tigers lies in the justness of their cause and the determination of the Tamil people which undermine all false propaganda of the Sri Lankan Government.

As far as the Sri Lankan Government is concerned, its propaganda reaches every nook and corner in the country through its Television network called Rupavahini and the Lake House group of newspapers which it controls, while its access to the latest technology in the communications revolution called Internet enables the Government to reach a sizeable number of clientele all over the world, let apart the truth or credibility of its propaganda. Not only do the newspapers published in Colombo come under Government censorship, but they are also greatly influenced by its opinion so that the newspapers are obliged and even threatened to publish the Government's point of view.

Even foreign corespondents living in Colombo come under the direct influence of the Government's news conferences and press releases. They have no free access to the war-torn Tamil areas and determine for themselves independently the exact situation and about the feelings of the people there. The Government's own propaganda and disemination of news (which would otherwise not be available to them), obliges several foreign correspondents to fall in line with the Government's intentions and avoid publishing any contradictory news. Several of these international organisations are manned by a large number of Sinhalese assistants who because of their racial affinity are unable to understand the justness of the Tamil cause. Even some of the Sinhalese elite, intelligentsia and newsmen who are convinced of the problems the Tamils are faced with still consider the Liberation Tigers as terrorists. It is therefore clear that even these men do not view the war in its true perspective.

The Sri Lankan Government also continues to manipulate the Colombo-based leaders of the Tamil United Liberation Front as well as other insignificant groups who call themselves representatives of the Tamil people in the north and east. The recent denial by TULF leaders of certain remarks by President Chandrika concerning the Tamils bears testimony to their moral depravity. Even those Tamils living in Colombo who consider themselves the cream of intelligentsia have formed themselves into an informal Organisation of Jaffna University Teachers for Human Rights, without even the knowledge of Jaffna University administration, to smear the image of the Liberation Tigers for the sake of position and money and their services are utilised by the Sri Lankan Government for its own ulterior motives.

On the top of all these uncanny dealings, President Chandrika makes use of the so-called Tamil Lakshman Kadirgamar, who does not know or even understand Tamil, in her propaganda efforts to destroy the Tamil Eelam cause. Under Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar, the Sri Lankan Foreign Ministry uses its Embassies and diplomatic Missions overseas in order to spread its scandalising propaganda concerning the image of the Liberation Tigers and the just cause of the Tamil people in their liberation struggle.

The main task of Sri Lankan Foreign Missions is to make use of Sinhalese, notably the Buddhists, living in foreign countries to organise demonstrations against the Tamils. Instead of concentrating on their normal diplomatic duty of maintaining friendly relations with other countries, these diplomatic missions and their staff are charged by Lakshman Kadirgamar to watch out for any developments in favour of the Tamils in those countries and to take immediate measures for countering such moves. Whenever there is a sign of sympathy for the Tamil cause in foreign countries, Lakshman Kadirgamar does not hesitate to condemn it as violation of Sri Lankan internal affairs.

Thus in spite of all its comparative advantage, the Sri Lankan Government has failed to impress the outside world and put a stop to the ever growing popularity and image of the Liberation Tigers for the simple reason that all its propaganda does not have an iota of truth and does not reflect the real situation of the war in Sri Lanka. Faced with this deficiency it is therefore obliged to spread unwholesome lies and half-truths and make improper use of its propaganda machine in order to counteract the upsurge in the popularity of the Liberation Tigers in the outside world.

1. Are Liberation Tigers an organisation of terrorists?

The primary motive of the Sri Lankan Government's international propaganda is to portray the Liberation Tigers as a terrorist organisation and its war with the Sri Lankan armed forces as terrorist activities. Its principal objective is therefore to cause damage to the image of the Liberation Tigers in the outside world and thereby belittle the Eelam liberation cause. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eeelam is the national liberation movement of the Tamils. It is an organisation with a long history of the Tamil liberation struggle for the past 24 years. It is a national organisation with an infrastructure of military, political, social, economic and legal institutions. It has been forced to resort to armed struggle after all the democratic and non-violent struggle of the Tamil people to win their legitimate rights had ended in failure.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eeelam (LTTE) had been recognised by both the Sri Lankan and Indian Governments at one time or another. And during the recent ceasefire the Governments of Norway, Netherlands and Canada had recognised it as a national liberation movement and had volunteered their services as observers.

Under the Chandrika Government, economic embargoes, ban on deep sea fishing, denial of freedom of movement, arrests, disappearances, sex violations, cold blooded murder and disposal of bodies in secret pits in areas under army control are premeditated and have become the order of the day. Aerial bombardments, artillery fire, attacks from gunboats, and other destructive measures undertaken by the Chandrika administration are intended to exterminate the entire Tamil race.

Government terrorism has reached its zenith under the Government of President Chandrika. Floating bodies in the Polgoda Lake, the inhuman aerial bombardment of the catholic church at Navaly, a school in Nagarkovil, the Kumarapuram massacre, bombardment in Nachchikuda, the excavations in Jaffna which reveal secret killings and disposal of bodies have all taken place during Chandrika's regime, making the whole civilised world to look with shame and horror.

2. Linking the Liberation Tigers with drug traffic

The policy of the Liberation Tigers is that drugs are dangerous to humanity and hence all sources of its traffic should be destroyed. Due to un untiring effort of the LTTE in the past, there were no sellers or users of drugs in the regions under its control. Even illicit arrack (liquour) and prostitution were banned because they were detrimental to the well-being of the society. But on the contrary, the use of drugs and child prostitution are everyday occurrence in the capital and other Sinhalese areas in the south of Sri Lanka. The child prostitution is carried out with the blessings of those with direct links in the higher echelons of the Sri Lankan Government.

3. Extortion of money under threat

The Liberation Tigers are burdened with the responsibility of assuring the security of the Tamil people from wanton attacks by the Sri Lankan forces, rehabilitating the hundreds of thousands of refugees who have been forced out of their homelands, counteracting the Government's economic embargo in Tamil areas by undertaking development projects, maintaining social and economic growth among its people, safeguarding the cultural heritage, health, language, education and other human values of the Tamil people from destruction. They need a massive fund to finance all these projects. The Liberation Tigers therefore levy taxes from their people, from commercial and industrial undetakings in their territory, and receive financial assistance from local and foreign well-wishers and benefactors.

It is important to note that what the Liberation Tigers receive as funds for maintaining the internal security of its people are diverted for rehabilitation, development, linguistic, educational, and cultural purposes. But what the Sri Lankan Government does is the exact opposite - it diverts economic assistance it receives for rehabilitation, development, education and other social, economic and cultural projects either in its entirety or a good part of it for continuing its war effort. The whole world is now aware that the Government uses the development funds destined to the north and east for its military operations against the Tamil people. It is for this reason that donor countries now insist that they would oversee the work undertaken by the aid receiving countries. Thus it can be concluded that the premeditated false propaganda of the Sri Lankan Government against the Liberation Tigers is a cover for its own mishandling of international aid.

4. Does the LTTE have links with international terrorist organisations?

The Liberation Tigers, as its name implies is a liberation organisation concerned with the struggle for the national self determination of the Tamil people. They are anxious to establish normal diplomatic relations with legally constituted countries in the world and continue their efforts in this direction by their political and diplomatic encounters. Hence the LTTE considers that it will be suicidal to establish links with international terrorist organisations such as the Mafia. The LTTE has no link whatsoever with such terrorist organisations. The Liberation Tigers, on the other hand, are concerned with maintaining friendly relations even with countries that give military training and other logistic assistance to the Sri Lankan armed forces who are engaged in a genocidal war against the Tamil people, and to convince these countries the extent to which their assistance to Sri Lanka is causing misery to the Tamil people. The LTTE gives due consideration to co-operate with non governmental and volunteer organisations and to give them all their assistance to carry out their missions. The Liberations Tigers have clearly understood that it is the Sri Lankan Government and its governmental machinery who are the enemies of the liberation struggle.

In their 24 year history of the liberation struggle, the Liberation Tigers have never indulged in any kidnapping of foreigners, holding them as ransom, threatening them or even causing damage to their property. But the Sri Lankan Government has threatened the Secretary General of the United Nations for his condemnation of the Sri Lankan Government for the massive displacement of the Tamil people by its military operations, threatened the M.S.F. for its condemnation of the Nagarkovil aerial bombing, and boycotted the conference in Colombo of non governmental organisations.

Thus the Sri Lankan Government has not hesitated to take punitive measures against those countries and organisations which did not agree with the Government's genocidal policy against the Tamil people. The Government has enlisted the services of experts from the United States, United Kingdom and Israel for training its troops, and even used them in military operations. Unable to withstand the growing influence of the Liberation Tigers in the international sphere and financial assistance given to them by Tamils living abroad, the Sri Lankan government has made established contacts with international terrorist organisations to hunt out and exterminate LTTE activists in foreign countries. This is evidenced by the recent cold-blooded murder of Nathan and Kajan in France. Former President J.R.Jayawardena once said that he would even seek the assistance of the devil to defeat the Tamil Liberation struggle. Today Chandrika is fulfilling that wish. These heinous actions of the Sri Lankan Government are a direct threat to the balance of power in South East Asia, disrupt regional peace in the Indian Ocean and help in organising a stage for a World Power confrontation.

5. Passport frauds and illicit immigration

Unable to withstand the death and destruction caused by the Sri Lankan Government's uncontrolled war in Tamil regions, people are forced to leave their homelands and seek refuge elsewhere. Some of them are helped to leave the country by hundreds of Travel Agencies in Colombo and in other countries in the world whose main motive is the making of money. Some of these flourishing Agencies and their Agents are functioning in accordance with the Law, while there are several others who engage in deception and fraud. Most of them function with the blessings of top level Government officers and institutions. It is clear that instead of controlling and overseeing the activities of these Agencies and Agents and maintaining law and order, the Sri Lankan Government accuses the Liberation Tigers to distract world attention on its incapacity.

6. Violation of human rights

Human rights are considered inviolable in the world order today. The Tamil race is one of the world's ancient races. It was a civilised race long before others and spread their civilisation to other parts of the world. Human friendship, human understanding, human rights, human civilisation and human culture were brought to the forefront by the Tamil race. It is therefore unnecessary that the Tamils be given a lesson on human rights. The Liberation Tigers who belong to this heritage do not hesitate to punish those who serve against the liberation cause and engage in its betrayal. They also carry out raids against armed Sinhalese thugs who have been colonised in Tamil areas by the Sri Lankan Government. Several thousands of innocent Tamils have been killed or maimed by these traitors and thugs. Many have lost their property and been driven out of their hereditory homeland. Hence the Liberation Tigers never show mercy on those who cause such losses on the Tamil community.

But at the same time, the Leader of the Liberation Tigers has released on humanitarian grounds

and without any conditions several soldiers and policemen who had been taken captive during combat operations. The Tamils have no enmity whatsoever against the Sinhalese community. On the contrary, they only sympathise with those who become victims of deception by Sinhalese racist Government leaders. While these leaders live in air conditioned houses and send their children to study in foreign countries or in famous schools in Colombo, enabling them to play Cricket and Tennis, go to Discotheques and Casinos and swindle large sums of money, the children of ordinary rural Sinhalese folk are despatched to the battle front in the north and east to die or be maimed for life. This has always evoked the sympathy and understanding of the Tamil people.

7. International action of the Liberation Tigers

The Liberation Tigers are the most organised and well controlled liberation movement in the world. The Liberation Tigers are a tightly knit organisation and without any indulgence in alcohol, tobacco, unlawful sex, theft of private property and other vices. They have established courts of justice, police and other legal institutions within the areas under their control and help maintain law and order, while at the same time they are also interested in the social and economic development of the Tamils. The civil population is free to participate in all these activities. Even international activists of the LTTE have similar controls.

The Tamil Eelam national leader V.Prabakaran insists that all international offices of the LTTE should function in accordance with the law of the individual country in which they find themselves. However, it has been the misfortune that representatives of the LTTE had been arrested in countries like Canada and Switzerland. Even though these actions are the direct result of the vicious propaganda of the Sri Lankan Government, the LTTE has taken all legal measures in this regard. It is on the basis of this legal action that the LTTE's Swiss representative was recently released. It is hoped that the Candian representative will also be released in the near future.

The International Office of the Liberation Tigers is based in London. There are several branch offices and co-ordination centres in other countries of the world. There are more LTTE offices than Sri Lankan Embassies in different countries and cities for the disemination of information. Tamil youths and intelligentsia who are devoted to the Tamil liberation cause and victims of Sinhalse racism form the backbone of this information network. They are devoid of self interest and sometimes even family responsibilities. The LTTE volunteers are a set of devoted activists who disregard the cold and the heat, face the wrath of disease and fatigue as well as all types of pressure and opposition, but continue on their inexorable path path of dedicated and selfless service. The Sri Lankan Government which had left no stone unturned to disrrupt the popularity of the Liberation Tigers all over the world by its false propaganda and legal procedures has finally unleashed its tentacles of international terrorism.

State terrorism against the Tamils was hitherto confined to the national limits of Sri Lanka. But now it has been exported to foreign shores. There is no more security for the thousands of refugees who have been obliged to leave their country due to the war and live in foreign countries. Madam Chandrika who had her higher education in Politics and Science in France had resorted to international terrorism which even her diehard predecessors J.R.Jayawardena and R.Premadsa had never ventured to do. The Sri Lankan Tamils living in foreign countries are therefore faced with the situation of protecting themselves from this international Sinhala terrorism.

The whole world is now aware that preparations are under way for a major military operation and extermination of the Tamils from Sri Lankan soil, and that all talk about peace is an eyewash to deceive and influence international public opinion. At the same time, the world has been awakened to the threat of international terrorism exported from Sri Lankan shores. Hence it will not be long before the international community would recognise the inalienable rights of the Tamil population in Sri Lanka, and that the only solution for a permanent solution to the Tamil question and the establishment of peace lies in granting the right of self determination to the Tamils and the establishment of a separate of Tamil Eelam comprising the northern and eastern provinces of the island of Sri Lanka.

March 1: Tamil Refugee Action Group. Senior Citizens Luncheon Club. 12 noon to 3.15 p.m. Venue: Pavitt Hall, Union Road, Wembley. Topic: Diabetes - Causes, symptoms and complications. Guest speaker: Miss Nina Patel, Senior Diabetes Specialist Nurse. Other speaker: Mr.C.Sithamparapillai, Chair, TRAG. Topic: Asylum, Welfare benefits and integration with foreign culture.

March 2: Monthly meeting of International Tamil Foundation. Guest Speaker: Professor Ganeshalingam of Jaffna University. Subject: Jaffna peninsula and the Jaffna University.

March 8: Year of the Churches in Solidarity with Uprooted People. European Churches Launch. 2.45 p.m. to 5 p.m. Bloomsbury Baptist Church, Shaftesbury Avenue, New Oxford Street. Speakers:Rt,.Revd Roy Williamson, Rt.Revd Pat O'Donoghue, Paul Boateng, MP, Peter Bottomley MP, Lola Onibiyo, Pat Taran (World Council of Churches). Choirs: Messiah's Heralds. TAMIL CHRISTIAN CHOIR.

March 17: Mass Tamil rally in Geneva, Switzerland.

March 29: Cultural programme in aid of "CHENCHOLAI". Acton Town Hall, Ealing.

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A LETTER FROM THE JAFFNA PENINSULA, FROM A MOTHER TO HER SON.

Thenmaradchy.
31 . 10 . 1996

Dear Son.

You may live under the trees in the jungles of the Vanni even starve. eating or drinking a few grains of rice bailed in water, But Remember you are free. We are dwelling in stone built houses, but we cannot sleep peacefully. The situation here Is like Batticaloa of yesterday.

The palmyrah trees are cut down and their number is dwindling. The army is doing the same to our young men also. The parents are anxious to send their children to the Vanni. They are protecting their young ones like hens hiding, their chicken from the vultures. One by one our young people are dragged away by the soldiers like animals taken to the slaughter house. I have no words to describe the tears of mothers and the children who are now separated.

Thenmaradchy is in the 'tight grip of the military. People are afraid to go to the next door grocery shop. All boundary fences had been removed, shady trees and fence sticks had been cut down on the orders of the army. There is no greenery in the region. We are hiding within the four walls of our houses. Even a cry of distress will not be answered, people are not respond.

If both of us are alive we will meet one day. Your welfare is mine too.

Your dear Mother.

DICTIONARY OF BIOGRAPHY
of the Tamils of Ceylon

The long-awaited Dictionary of Biography of the Tamils of Ceylon, compiled by the veteran engineer, historian, and scholar, Sanmugam Arumugam, is now available from

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This compilation portrays the profiles of over 775 Ceylon Tamils who have contributed some good to the community and spans centuries from the era of the Tamil kings of Jaffna to the present time. The book runs into 253 pages.

Cost: £12.50. Postage- UK £1. Overseas £.3.50.

Tamil
Eelam
Literature

TAMIL EELAM LITERATURE: BOOK LAUNCH IN LONDON

An anthology of Tamil Eelam literature - short stories, poems, paintings, essays - translated from Tamil to English, was launched in London on 16 February.

Compiled and edited by M.NEMINATHAN and published by the Tamil Information Centre, London, the book was launched in the presence of a representative gathering of Tamil activists and literati.

Short stories by A.S.Murukananthan, VA.Rasarathinam, M.Thalayasingam, S.Ponnuthurai, Shanmugam Sivalingam, poems by Tamil woman fighter Kasthuri, M.Ponnampalam, A.Jesurasa, M.Pushparajan, "Vannachchiraku", Dushyanthan and N.K.Mahalingam are included in the 118-page anthology.

Paintings by Krishnarajah, Kittu, Kailasanathan, A.Mark, and Constantine an essay on Folk and Theatrical Drama of the East, a report on the treatment of Tamil political detainees in Sri Lanka as narrated by a Tamil political detainee, the stirring submission made by Thangathurai at the High Court of Colombo, on 24th February 1983 (Thangathurai and 52 other Tamil political prisoners were brutally killed by Sinhalese prisoners and prison guards at Welikade high security jail at Welikade), a letter from the battlefield, and a book review by Dr.Alan Hooper of Adele Ann's Women Fighters of Tamil Eelam are also featured in the anthology.

The book launch function was chaired by writer, poet and Director TIC, S.Sriskandarajah, and the speakers included Prof. Kopan Mahadeva, writer and poet, Joe N'Jie, writer and barrister, Ron Bowell, Poet and Solicitor, Benedetto Luigi Compagagnoni, Connoisseur of Greek and Latin Literature and lawyer, Dr.Ergin Yildizoglu and N.Krishnarajah, Cultural worker and Solicitor. Prof. Kopan Mahadeva was the facilitator at the panel discussion that followed.

Enquiries about the book could be had at the Tamil Information Centre, Thamil House, 720, Romford Road, London E12 6BT

People

Michael Jackson's baby boy

It is not every husband who can get admitted to a delivery room and be handed over the surgical scissors to cut the umbilical cord of his new born baby. But then, Michael Jackson is an exceptional father.

According to the London tabloid, THE SUN, Michael Jackson was in the Los Angeles hospital on the 13th when Debbie Rowe (37) gave birth to their son. Invited into the delivery room when the baby was born, the doctor handed over the surgical scissors to the proud father who thereafter did the needful. "He had tears of happiness in his eyes", the tabloid quoted a nurse who was in attendance.

The baby is reported to have weighed 3.19 kilograms and was 53.3 centimetres long. "The baby is white in skin colour with afro features, including a broadish nose and very dark, curly hair", according to the nurse.

THE SUN said the hospital increased, its own security for Jackson's presence, while Jackson himself brought dozens of private bodyguards.

Man, Woman and Cricket

Cricket is not her first love. It may not even be her second. Dr.Anjali Tendulkar, wife of cricketing wunderkid Sachin Tendulkar prefers her books on paediatrics to discussing cricket. In an interview to THE TELEGRAPH while on tour with Sachin in South Africa, Anjali made it clear that she and her husband never discuss the game... And it is cricket which has kept the two apart ever since they got married in May '95. She was quoted as saying: "With the amount of cricket being played this year I keep telling Sachin that Iíll see him only in 1998". And for all those who wondered if Sachin reads his fan mail, this is what Anjali has to say: " Sachin gets to see letters which he needs to see". No prizes for guessing who decides what he sees. *(OUTLOOK magazine)*

Diana and the Pak doctor

The Pakistani cardiac surgeon alleged to be secretly involved with Princess Diana is set to give up their relationship in favour of a traditional Islamic bride, according to a British tabloid.

Dr. Hasnat Khan who has been romantically linked to the Princess of Wales for several months, is said to have become "terrorised" by overpowering media attention which is ruining his life and has told Diana that a relationship and marriage is not possible He is reported to be flying back to his native Punjab to seek an arranged marriage within his local Pathan community.

Known affectionately as Nathee within his, family, Dr.Khan's quiet professionalism won the affections of the Princess of Wales when she watched him perform a triple heart bypass at London's Royal Brompton Hospital last year.

M.P. in a Naxalite hero's role

A Telugu Desam Party's Rajya Sabha M.P. in India has made the Andhra Pradesh Police baying for his scalp by playing the hero in a Telugu film that eulogises the Naxalites.

The film called ADAVILO ANNA (literally, the Forest-dwelling Brother) stars the M.P. Mohan Babu and villainises the state police. The Naxalites are portrayed as "champions of the downtrodden", while the police DSP is shown as a sadistic figure.

Says Mohan Babu:- "Believe me, it's a real life story. The film is based on the ideology of my mentor, N.T.Rama Rao, who often described Naxalites as true patriots".

But, says Police official Mahaboob Sahib: "When policemen are laying down their lives in their fight against Naxalites, it's sad that a ruling party M.P. has portrayed us as unworthy".

The film maker, R.Narayana Murthy, is known for Left-oriented movies.

Priyanka Gandhi weds Robert Vadra

Daughter of Sonia and Rajiv Gandhi, Priyanka,was married to businessman Robert Vadra at a simple ceremony at the Gandhi residence, 10, Janpath, New Delhi on Tuesday 18 February.Only around 150 people were invited for what was really a private occasion which included close family friends and official dignitaries.

According to reports, 26-yea old Priyanka looked visibly shy and coy, standing between her husband and brother Rahul, when they came outside 10, Janpath for a brief photo session. Priyanka wore a south Indian temple saree which belonged to her grandmother Indira Gandhi, and was maried according to the same traditional Kashmiri pandit rites by which Indira Gandhi waswedded.

While the place was crawling with security, plainclothes men Delhi armed police and security guards, and Black Cat commandos,the guests included President Shankar Dayal Sharma, Vice-President K.R.Narayanan, Prime Minister Deve Gowda, Congress president Sitaram Kesri and their wives. Close family friends included cinema superstar Amitabh Bachchan, Ajitabh Bachchan, Captain Satish Sharma and wife Sterre.

While everyone was decked in gleaming silk sarees, designer-menswear, heavy brocades and sparkling jewellery, (even thefemale policewomen wore jewellery), the police dog also wore a red brocade coat, while the metal detector at the entrance was decorated with flowers!

* * * *

Eelam Tamils celebrate Australia Day

Hundreds of Eelam Tamil residents in Melbourne participated enthusistically in an Australia Day pageantry and procession along with other nationalities on January 26.

Picture shows a colourful group dressed up as a bridal party, with bride, bridegroom, bridegroom's "Tholan" in traditional attire.The group was escorted with ladies dressed in red and yellow sarees, the Tamil Eelam colours.

The procession which started from the Victoria Parliament buildings wound its way back to the same spot and ended with a public meeting.

* * * *

Social & Personal

Jaffna Central fetes Dr. Ethir

Dr. & Mrs N.Ethirveerasingham were guests of honour at a dinner held on 25th Jan 1997at the Palmbeach restaurant - West Ealing- London. An Alumnus of Jaffna Cental College, Dr. Ethir is an agriculturist, academic and-Sportsman He represented Sri Lanka in the high jump event in the Olympic Games at Helsinki and Melbourne. Also in the Asian games at Manila,Tokyo and Djakarta. He won a Gold Medal at-Tokyo, in 1958. From 1994 he was a visiting lecturer in Agriculture at the University of Jaffna located at Kilinochchi.

Again in early Sept. 1995, motivated by appalling conditions in the North, he returned to Kilinochchi District as a volunteer to work with the farmers, He was appointed Chairman Coodinator of the sub committees of the emergency food programme in the GA divisions of the North.

Dr.Ethir has been actively involved in settling of internally displaced persons and had contact with all sections of the community. Having lived worked travelled to and from Jaffna Peninsula, discussed the many issues confronting the Tamil People with farmers, teachers, students traders, Government servants and the LTTE and experienced daily life as a civilian in the North he has gained a good understanding of the current situation and developments in the North. After a detailed description of the deplorable situation there he expressed his strong feeling that those of us living outside must speak with one voice and work towards a negotiated of this long and prolonged process of self destruction.

Dr.Ethir studied Agriculture at the University of California and earned his Doctorate in Agric.Edn. at Cornell University New York. He lectured in the Universities of Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Papau Guinea and Sri Lanka. He was Attached to the UNESCO for five years.

He is currently residing in the USA with his wife who is an American and with three children, He hopes to be back at Mankulam - Northern Province in March this year.

K.Balakrishnan
Honorary Secretary -
JCCOB & GA.
03.02 .1997.
U.K BRANCH.

Social & Personal

A Tamil honoured by the Queen for his housing work

Captain Kandiah Chandran, a Chiswick resident in U.K, has been honoured by the Queen for his housing work.

Capt. Chandran who hails from Jaffna was given an MBE for his achievements while being chief executive of the Presentation Housing Association for the last seven years. When he took over as Chief executive in 1989, the association had a difficult of £200,000 and its future was in dobut. Today, the association has a surplus of £4 million, property assets with an open market vacant possession value of £106 million and an annual development program of about £10 million.

When Chandran picked up the reins at PHA, he had 600 homes in management and no development programme. Last year, the association complete its 2000th home.

Having been the driving froce behind the success of the PHA, he handed over the reins last year to become the Director of the Presentation Education and Employment Charitable Trust. The trust will include a mentoring project to help black youngters with formal education progrmmes and job skills.

Chandran (63), formerly Chandrapragasam, was a Captain in the Sri Lankan army, and an old student of Jaffna College, Vaddukoddai.

Mrs.Vimala Sockanathan

Born:27.08.27 - Died:05.02.97

Daughter of Ponniah Rajaratnam (Surveyor) and Muthuthamby Sellakannu of Kokuvil East, Jaffna, wife of Thampoe Sockanathan (Food Inspector, Colombo Municipality), mother of Wimal Sockanathan (Wimal &Co, Solicitors, and BBC), Yoga Thillainathan (Sunrise Radio, London, and SLBC)and Dr.Ravi Sockanathan (Huddersfield), mother-in-law of Pathma Sockanathan (Solicitor), A.Thillainathan (SLAS) and Sutha Sockanathan, grandmother of Rajivan, Tulasi,Thuwaraka, Sripathy, Sanjeev, Soujana and Jeevapriya expired in UK on 5th February. Cremation took place at London Golders Green crematorium on 8th February.

Vimala was well known in Colombo in the 60s for her drama productions through her group called Vimala-Uthayanan productions

58, Kingsmead Avenue, London
NW9 7NN. Tel: 0181-205-0397

* * * *

Shanthakumar - Lohini

Shanthakumar, son of Vasantha and Rajah Wilson and Lohini, daughter of Loges and Thanga Arulambalam at Kollupitiya Methodist Church, Colombo 3, Sri Lanka, on 4th January 1997.

Vasantha is the daughter of Dr.Barr Kumarakulasinghe and Rajah is brother of Prof. A.J.Wilson. Loges is the eldest daughter of late Dr.John R.Wilson and Thanga is eye surgeon in Nottingham.

* * * *

Vaheeswaran - Biruntha

Vaheeswaran, son of Mr and Mrs.Vigneswaran, and Biruntha, daughter of Mr & Mrs. Vigneswaralingam of 42, Kenwood Drive, Beckenham, Kent BR3 6QY, on January 19,at Wandsworth Town Hall,UK

* * * *

Vijayaveri-Rathini

Vijayaveri, son of Mrs.V. Velayuthampillai and Rathini, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Sivasubramaniam, at New Kathiresan Hall, Colombo, on 29th January. 1639 E Jefferson St.Apt.204. Rockville. MD 20852, USA.

* * * *

Mohandas K.Samuel

Mohandas K.Samuel, formerly of Asian Development Bank, Manila, the Philippines passed away on 4th February at King's College London. Husband of Utaiwan, father of Montira (Canada), Manasavee and Maithri (U.S.A.), eldest son of the late J.M.G.Samuel and Mrs.Rasamanie Samuel, brother of Chandra and Peter (U.K.) and Indran (U.S.A.), brother-in-law of Dr.Rajeswaran, Lalitha and Mercy. Funeral took place at South London crematorium on Feb.8

* * * *

Obituaries

Dorothy Thangaratnam

The death occured on 14 February of Dorothy Thangaratnam, wife of the late William Navaratnam of Erlalai in her 89th year. She leaves behind four children - Pathma Perinbanayagam of 76 C, Whitehill Road,Cravesend, Kent; Dr. N.S. Navabalachandran (Maryland U.S.A.); Ranee Wijayanayagam (British Virgin Islands) and N.J.Thavabala chandran (Melbourne, Australia).

The funeral took place at Gravesend Methodist Church on 22 February.Mrs.Navaratnam was Headmistress of MethodistMission School, Kandapola, for over 30 years.

Dr. Thamotherampillai

Dr.A. Thamotherampillai of 27, Claremont Road, Seven Kings, Ilford, Essex, formaly of Thangodai,Karainagar, aged 75, passed away On 16th February. Funeral took place on 23 February at city of London crematoruim, Manor Park.

Thamotherampillai was J.M.O, Kandy and Colombo.

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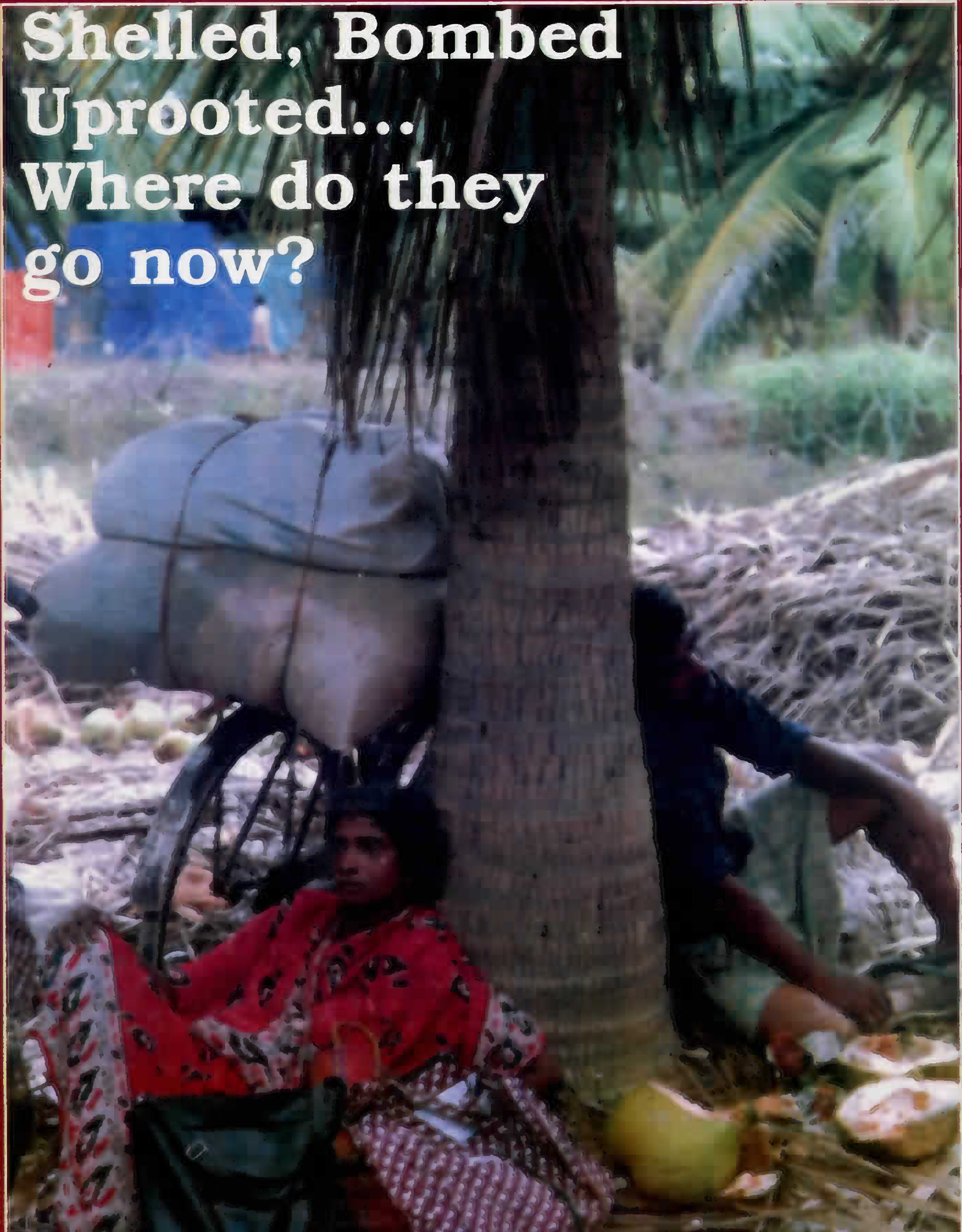

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